FOREIGN
BROADCAST
INFORMATION
SERVICE

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-226
Friday
24 November 1995

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-226 CONTENTS *24 November 1995*

NOTICE: An * indicates material that may not be disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Welcomes Agreement on Bosnia *[MENA]* 1

Islamic Affairs

Islamic World League Welcomes Agreement on Bosnia *[SPA]* 1
OIC's Algabid Hails Dayton Agreement on Bosnia *[SPA]* 1
Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 14 Nov 1

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Warns of 'Cooperation' Between Extremists *[EFE]* 4
Ghawshah: Legislative Council Elections 'Deception' *[SANA]* 5
Ba'th Party To Participate in Elections *[Jericho VOP]* 5
Hamas Cancels Announcement on Election Participation *[Jerusalem Radio]* 5
Al-Tahrir Party Issues Edict Against Elections *[Jerusalem Radio]* 5
'Local' Committee Formed To Monitor Elections *[Jericho VOP]* 5
Sha'th on New Israeli Cabinet, Other Issues *[Jericho VOP]* 5
Ministry Denounces Earth Moving Works in Hebron *[Jericho VOP]* 7
150 Israeli Soldiers Withdraw From Nabulus *[Jericho VOP]* 7
Deportees in Jordan Seek Return to 'Homeland' *[Jericho VOP]* 7
'Arafat's Activities in Netherlands Reported *[Jericho VOP]* 7
Hamas Seen Behind Formation of New Party *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 23 Nov]* 8

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Zeroual Reiterates Will To Implement Election Pledges *[Algiers Radio]* 9
FIS' Kebir Notifies Zeroual of Readiness To Talk 9
  Takes 'Important Reconciliation Step' *[London AL-HAYAH 23 Nov]* 9
  French TV Airs Kebir Letter *[Paris TV]* 11
  FIS To Seek Cease-Fire *[Paris Radio]* 11
FIS Reportedly Split Over Elections *[Paris International]* 12
Constitutional Council Gives Official Election Results *[Algiers Radio]* 12
FLN Leader Congratulates President *[Algiers Radio]* 12

Egypt

U.S. Monitoring of Election Campaigns Reported *[ROSE AL-YUSUF 20 Nov]* 12
Willingness To Join Bosnian Peacekeepers Signaled *[Cairo Radio]* 13
  Musa Comments on Sending Troops *[MENA]* 13
Gunmen Fire on Envoy's Residence in Sofia *[MENA]* 13
Paper Criticizes Groups Claiming Embassy Attack *[Cairo Radio]* 13
Court Hands Down Verdicts, Closes MB Headquarters *[MENA]* 13

Action Against MB Detailed; Paper Closed *[AFP]* 14
Voters Urged To Be Alert To 'Impostors' After Attack *[Cairo Radio]* 14

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi: Dayton Accord U.S. 'Election Propaganda' *[Tripoli TV]* 15
UN Delegation Circulates Statement on UN Sanctions *[JANA]* 15
JANA Editor on UN Sanctions Extension 15
Daily Urges Withdrawal From UN *[JANA]* 16

IRAQ

Oil Minister on Resolution 986, UN, Husayn Kamil 18
    Sets Conditions for Compliance With 986 *[AFP]* 18
    Discusses Relationship With UN *[London AL-HAYAH 23 Nov]* 18
    Blames Husayn Kamil for Problems With UN *[Vienna DER STANDARD 22 Nov]* 21
Foreign Ministry Official Criticizes Ekeus Statements *[INA]* 23
Paper on Relationship With UN Special Commission *[INA]* 23
King Husayn Said Seeking To Base Iraqi Opposition in Amman *[SPA]* 23
Egypt Said Trying To Cancel Ban on Internal Flights *[Baghdad TV]* 24
Saddam Chairs RCC, Ba'th Party Meeting *[INA]* 24
Saddam Attends Air Force Symposium, Makes Remarks *[Baghdad TV]* 24
Opposition Reports Baghdad Blast, Army Defections *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 23 Nov]* 25
Leading Communist Urges Formation of Communist Party *[AL-JUMHURIYAH 7 Nov]* 25
Army Reportedly Clashes With Tribe in al-Najaf *[SAWT AL-MAR'AH 22 Nov]* 25
Agricultural Plastic Covers Factory Established *[Baghdad TV]* 26
Two Public Companies Established Under Decree *[INA]* 26
Paper on 'Miserable State' of Baghdad Subways *[AL-JUMHURIYAH 13 Nov]* 26

ISRAEL

Peres on Syria Track, Reassures Palestinians *[Jerusalem TV]* 28
Peres To Show Clinton Document on Golan Withdrawal *[Jerusalem TV]* 28
    To Stress Need for Public al-Asad Appeal *[HA'ARETZ 23 Nov]* 28
Foreign Minister Baraq on Scope of Powers, Syria *[Jerusalem TV]* 29
Baraq on Vision of Settlement, Rejects 1967 Border *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Rabinovich Rejects Claims of Demotion in Syria Role *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Netanyahu Addresses Knesset, Faults Accords *[Jerusalem TV]* 30
Shahal: Rabin Assassination 'Not a Conspiracy' *[THE JERUSALEM POST 23 Nov]* 33
Police Learn of Plans To Murder EYAL's Raviv *[HA'ARETZ 22 Nov]* 33
Another EYAL Member Detained for 'Illegal Activity' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 33
Suspect Names Rabbi Consulted on Assassination Plan *[Jerusalem TV]* 34
Baraq Decides To Grant Citizenship to Pollard *[Jerusalem Radio]* 34
    Lawyers Draw Comparison to Saudi Spy Case *[Jerusalem TV]* 34
Iraq Said To Have Considered Biological Attack *[HA'ARETZ 24 Nov]* 35
Tunisian Official Barred From Gaza Strip Office *[Jerusalem Radio]* 35
Peres Explains Portfolio Distribution *[Jerusalem Radio]* 36
Meretz Vetoes Understanding With NRP; NRP Ends Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 36
Peres To Continue Coalition Talks With NRP, Tzomet *[Jerusalem Radio]* 37
Meretz' Sadiq Threatens Withdrawal From Coalition *[Jericho VOP]* 37

JORDAN

Foreign Ministry Welcomes Bosnian Peace Accord *[Amman Radio]* 39
King Said To Meet Iraqi Opposition in London *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 23 Nov]* 39

- Prince Hasan Meets Saudi Ambassador, Stresses Ties *[Amman Radio]* 39

LEBANON

- SLA's Lahd: No Changes in Policy on Security Zone *[THE JERUSALEM POST 23 Nov]* 40
- Individuals Seized by Hizballah for 'Spying' Named *[AL-SHIRA' 20 Nov]* 40
- Hizballah Denies Training Bahraini Oppositionists *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 41

SYRIA

- AL-THAWRAH on Ross' Tour, Peres' Statements *[SANA]* 42
- Radio Underlines Commitment to 'Genuine Peace' *[Damascus Radio]* 42
- Press: Peres Needs To Match Words With Deeds *[Damascus Radio]* 43
- Israeli Statements Characterized by 'Some Responsibility' *[Damascus Radio]* 44
- Commentary Notes 'Discouraging' Israeli Signals on Peace *[Damascus Radio]* 44
- Defense Minister Addresses Air Academy Graduates *[Damascus TV]* 45

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

- Iran Reportedly Turns Down Dialogue With Taleban *[AFP]* 46
- 'Foreign Intervention' Blamed for Continued Fighting *[IRNA]* 46
- Fighting Said To Continue in Khvord Kabul Area *[IRNA]* 46
- Government Admits Losing Base to Taleban *[AFP]* 46
  - Futher on 'Captured' Town *[AFP]* 47
- Armed Forces Reportedly Kill 125 Taleban Near Kabul *[Kabul Radio]* 47
- Kabul Receives Supplies; Jalalabad Road Said Open *[Kabul Radio]* 48
- Taleban Reportedly Shoots Down MiG Fighter *[Islamabad Radio]* 48

Bangladesh

- Election Schedule Announced; Zia Issues Statement *[Dhaka Radio]* 48
  - Zia Urges Participation in Elections *[Dhaka Radio]* 49
  - Police, Opposition Clash After Announcement *[AFP]* 49

India

- Al-Faran Said Ready 'To Swap' Hostages for Leader *[AFP]* 50
  - Abductors Deny Plan for Exchange *[AFP]* 51
- Kashmir Abductors Call For Release of Colleagues *[AFP]* 51
- Two Killed in Blast; Security Tightened in Delhi *[Delhi TV]* 52
  - Blast Said Claimed by 'Sikh Militant Group' *[AFP]* 52
  - Police Say Plastic Explosive Used *[AFP]* 52
- Five Policemen Said Killed in Assam Bomb Attack *[Delhi Radio]* 53
- 'Militants' Gun Down Former Kashmir Legislator *[Delhi Radio]* 53
- Low-Cost Stealth Technology Reportedly Developed *[AJ 29 Oct]* 53

Iran

- U.S. 'Injustice' Said Imposed on Bosnian Muslims *[Tehran International]* 54
- UN Envoy Backs Dayton Accord, Although 'Not Just' *[IRNA]* 54
- Va'ezi Said To 'Fully' Support Bosnian Accord *[IRNA]* 55
- Russian Envoy's Comments on Nuclear Ties Reported *[IRNA]* 55
- Va'ezi Comments on Russia Ties, Caspian, Bushehr *[IRNA]* 56
- Commentary Views Russian Ties, Minister's Visit *[Tehran International]* 57

Minister's Comments on Afghanistan, War Reported 57
  Said 'Optomistic' for Peace *[TEHRAN TIMES 19 Nov]* 57
  Calls For End to Fighting *[IRNA]* 57
  Comments on Situation in Interview *[Tehran TV]* 58
Pakistan Said Lying About Role in Afghanistan *[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 12 Nov]* 59
Doha Negotiation Team Head on Ties With UAE *[IRNA]* 60
Papers View Outcome of Talks With UAE *[IRNA]* 60
  Radio Commentary on Official Talks *[Tehran International]* 61
Oil Minister Sees OPEC Conference as 'Positive' *[IRNA]* 62
Public Support for Bank Case Verdicts Noted *[IRNA]* 62
Radio on New 'Battalions' To Enforce 'Virtue' *[Tehran Radio]* 62

Pakistan

Minister Interviewed on Blast at Eyptian Embassy *[MENA]* 62
Embassy Bombers Said 'Certainly Not Pakistani' *[MENA]* 63
Minister on Investigation of Egyptian Embassy Bomb *[MENA]* 63
  U.S. Help in Investigation Criticized *[THE MUSLIM 22 Nov]* 63
Sources: Sudanese Sought in Egyptian Embassy Bomb *[THE NATION 23 Nov]* 64
Minister Says 10 Arrested for Egyptian Embassy Bomb *[Islamabad TV]* 66
Meeting Views Egyptian Militant Group 'Threat' *[THE MUSLIM 23 Nov]* 66
'Advisers' Reportedly Offered for Bosnian Efforts *[Islamabad International]* 67
Bosnia Accord Said Welcomed; U.S. Role Praised *[Islamabad Radio]* 67
  Accord Said 'Unlikely' To Bring Peace *[THE MUSLIM 23 Nov]* 68
Spokesman Speaks on Peace Plan for Afghanistan *[Islamabad TV]* 68
Afghan Peace Plan Discussed With Saudi Arabia *[Islamabad Radio]* 69
Article Views Purchase of Frigates From China *[DAWN 21 Nov]* 69
Iranian Firm Said Willing To Invest 70 Billion *[Islamabad International]* 69
Balochistan Minister, Official Said Shot Dead *[Islamabad TV]* 69
Brother of Sindh Chief Minister Said Killed *[Islamabad Radio]* 70

Sri Lanka

President Addresses Nation, Calls For Peace Talks *[AFP]* 70
  Further on President's Call for Peace *[DAILY NEWS 24 Nov]* 70
'Revised' Plan for Tamil Autonomy Said Announced *[AFP]* 71
Defense Ministry Says Jaffna Lagoon 'No-Go-Zone' *[LANKAPUVATH]* 71
Troops Said Consolidating in Jaffna City Area *[Colombo International]* 71
Military Announces Siege on 'Rebel Citadel' *[AFP]* 72
Tamil Rebels Reportedly Shoot Down Air Force Plane *[AFP]* 72
  Crash Cause Said 'Still Not Known' *[LANKAPUVATH]* 72

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Welcomes Agreement on Bosnia

NC2211182595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1420 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 22 Nov (MENA)—The Arab League General Secretariat has welcomed the comprehensive peace agreement reached by the leaders of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia in Dayton, Ohio, yesterday, ending a tragedy of destructive civil war that lasted for more than three years in former Yugoslavia. In a statement released today, the Arab League General Secretariat said that the agreement reached by the parties on the conflict in Bosnia during arduous negotiations in Ohio under the auspices of the United States will put an end to war and lay the foundations of a comprehensive peace in Bosnia. It notes that Bosnia will remain united within its internationally recognized borders.

The statement said that the agreement will enable the Bosnian citizens to return to their homes, ensure that life will return to normal, and open a new page of peaceful coexistence among the people. The Arab League expressed its appreciation for the U.S. role in reaching this agreement and voiced its hope that the international community will concert efforts to consolidate this agreement, act to reconstruct the country, and achieve stability and prosperity for the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It is worth noting that the Arab League asserted in its previous resolutions the need for to finally stop the fighting, to bring an end to the bloodshed, and to expedite a fair and permanent solution that would establish security and independence for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Islamic Affairs

Islamic World League Welcomes Agreement on Bosnia

LD2211163495 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1532 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mecca, 22 Nov — The Islamic World League has described the agreement initialed by the warring sides in former Yugoslavia to bring about peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a good step. It added that it is the best thing that can be achieved at present in order to safeguard for the Bosnian people their real entity [as received] and give them the right to freedom and a respectable life in their country, land, and homes.

A spokesman for the Islamic World League said in a statement issued today that the establishment of total peace will enable the children and women refugees to return to their homes and homeland and lead a free and respectable life. The spokesman added that he hopes this agreement will be a prelude to a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Balkans.

OIC's Algabid Hails Dayton Agreement on Bosnia

LD2311210195 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1848 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 23 Nov — Dr. Hamed Algabid, secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC], has welcomed the agreement for peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina which was signed in Dayton, Ohio. The press communique released today said that the agreement must put a final end to the war and the suffering which has gone on for too long in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The communique added that the OIC, which constantly supported the just cause of the Bosnian people, has always called for a political settlement in Bosnia-Herzegovina on the basis of justice, international legitimacy, and respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Bosnia- Hercegovina within its internationally-recognized borders.

The secretary general also expressed his hope to see all the clauses of the peace agreement implemented, particularly those preserving the present borders of the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, keeping Sarajevo as a unified city and guaranteeing the right of refugees to return to their homes, in addition to the clauses on international guarantees to protect human rights and hold democratic elections. All these important elements were always regarded by the OIC as an integral part of any peaceful settlement.

The secretary general also said that the establishment of lasting peace and security in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a new challenge to the international community which is called on to prepare the suitable conditions for the safeguard of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and unity of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina in order to enable the government of this country to carry out its tasks effectively.

The OIC secretary general reiterated the readiness of the organization's member states to take part in any international mechanism for the implementation of the aforementioned peace agreement.

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 14 Nov

NC2111124095

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 14 November edition of the Arabic-language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Chairman of Board of Directors Warns Against Interference
2. Seminar Criticizes U.S. Congress Decision on Embassy Transfer
3. Awqaf Ministry Offers Private Lessons in Mosques
4. Editorial Urges Promotion of Islam's 'Tolerant' Teachings
5. Religious View on Sex Education in Schools
6. Writer Calls For Legal Action Against Undocumented Marriages
7. Al-Azhar Shaykh Writes About Adultery, Perversion
8. Former Health Minister Cited on Transplants, Mercy Killing
9. Linguist Notes Koran's Role in Islam
10. Islamic Fund Chief Urges Contributions From Governments
11. Writer Defends Islam Against Terrorism Charges
12. Columnist Highlights Role of Mosques

CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS WARNS AGAINST INTERFERENCE

Samir Rajab, chairman of 'AQIDATI's board of directors, writes a 250-word article on page 1 rejecting interference in Egypt's affairs. He begins by saying: "Once again we assert that the Egyptian people absolutely reject all forms of trusteeship. Because of this, how would you describe those who want to impose themselves falsely in the name of Islam?"

He adds: "Thank God we are all Muslims;" we pray, pay alms, and seek God's mercy. Rajab then asks: "On what basis does a limited number of people insist on directing the whole population according to their own will and desire?"

He says: "It has been proven unequivocally that the black robes in Iran and the leaders of terrorism in Sudan have been rejected by their people. So the moment of salvation is undoubtedly coming." He then asks if it is reasonable for "some people in Egypt to hop on our lives" without permission through false slogans, destructive ideas, and behavior rejected by religion and ethics.

Rajab adds: "We will never trust those who threw the citizens' concerns and the interests of religion and the country behind their backs, waiting to grab privileges and advantages exclusively for themselves. If we do, we would expose ourselves and our children to a grave danger."

SEMINAR CRITICIZES U.S. CONGRESS DECISION ON EMBASSY TRANSFER

A 300-word report on page 2, filed by Jamal Salim, details proceedings of a seminar on Jerusalem organized by al-Azhar University. It says: "The participants in the seminar 'Jerusalem—its Past and Future,' which was organized by al-Azhar University, criticized the U.S. Congress bill to transfer the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem even though the measure is not within the Congress' jurisdiction." The participants, the report adds, urged concerted efforts by Muslims to answer "the Israeli allegations that forged Jerusalem's history." They "asserted" there will be no genuine peace in the Middle East without "regaining Jerusalem and purging it of the odious Israeli occupation."

AWQAF MINISTRY OFFERS PRIVATE LESSONS IN MOSQUES

Page 3 features a 820-word report entitled "Enhancement Groups in Mosques Can Successfully Combat the Mafia of Private Lessons" on private classes being offered to students in various mosques.

The report by Muhammad al-Abnudi says that this year the Awqaf ministry began spreading the idea of education enhancement groups in all its mosques "to counter private lessons that burden families and parents." It adds that officials in charge have stated that the experiment was very successful in the last two years in several mosques and that the number of students wanting to join these groups has increased.

EDITORIAL URGES PROMOTION OF ISLAM'S 'TOLERANT' TEACHINGS

A 330-word editorial appears page 3 that discusses terrorism following the Israeli prime minister's assassination; it also cites a TIME report on the subject.

It says that, when covering and analyzing Rabin's murder, the U.S. magazine TIME, "known for its hatred of Islam and Muslims, asserted that terrorism is not an Islamic industry and that Islam is completely innocent of the crimes of violence and terrorism that are sometimes committed in the name of Islam."

Moreover, the editorial adds, the magazine said Jewish extremists kill anyone regardless of their religion, race, and affiliation.

The editorial notes that if "the West has finally acknowledged that Islam is innocent of terrorism, we, as Muslims, are required to bear the responsibility for Islamic propagation by presenting to the world a good model and example of Islam."

RELIGIOUS VIEW ON SEX EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

A 125-word commentary on sex education appears in the religious decrees section of the newspaper on page 4. It is compiled by Musa Hal.

A shaykh named 'Abd-al-'Azim al-Humayli answers a question from a youth who seeks a religious verdict on calls to introduce sex education to schools. The shaykh says the call to teach sex in schools bears "indisputable dangers and mistakes" and that the result would be counterproductive, noting that every society has its own ethics that it preserves.

He adds that the idea of sex education was launched at the Beijing conference and that Egypt's "Islamic" stance was "honorable" when it expressed reservation at such calls. He then addresses the youth saying: "Rest assured, my son. Egypt is an Islamic state that adheres to the principles of its religion so it cannot allow such frivolity."

WRITER CALLS FOR LEGAL ACTION AGAINST UNDOCUMENTED MARRIAGES

A 340-word article by Basyuni al-Halawani is run on page 6. He discusses the case of a woman who had two babies outside wedlock; she sold the first for 100 pounds and offered the second for sale at a similar price. He notes that this woman is not a specific case "in our society" but an example of "thousands of degraded women who frequent apartments to practice prostitution—sometimes secretly, sometimes openly—thanks to the expertise and games of lawyers who use undocumented or common-law marriages to elude the morals police."

The writer says: "Those who bury their heads in sand and are afraid of facing these cases and revealing their moral crimes on the pretext that such cases tarnish our country's bright image are mistaken. Islamic Egypt will remain a beacon of knowledge and fine conduct. Immoral crimes are an international phenomenon from which all countries suffer. We must have complete courage to handle every deviation rejected by our religion's teachings and original social traditions."

He calls for a stand on the current laws "that encourage deviation" and notes that prostitution networks include "deviant lawyers" who prepare documents necessary for the "degraded" women as they practice prostitution in "night clubs."

He says: "If these perverse people use Islam's sanctioning of undocumented marriages and regard it as their trump card to practice prostitution openly and under the protection of the law, I appeal to al-Azhar and the Egyptian mufti's office to adopt a serious stand to confront this phenomenon."

AL-AZHAR SHAYKH WRITES ABOUT ADULTERY, PERVERSION

In a 1,000-word article on page 7, al-Azhar's Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq discusses the benefits of educating youths in Islam to protect them from deviation and teach the advantages of marriage. He says boys and girls and men and women in general are required to be virtuous to protect themselves from sexual perversion through "adultery, homosexuality, and lesbianism."

He notes that perversion is prohibited by Islam and all religions because it is a "social ill" that destroys health and "weakens the nation's structure" by spreading deadly diseases. He also cites Koranic verses banning adultery.

FORMER HEALTH MINISTER CITED ON TRANSPLANTS, MERCY KILLING

Pages 8 and 9 feature a 3,500-word interview with Dr. Ibrahim Badran, who the paper describes as a surgeon and former health minister. In the interview conducted by Amal Hasan, he discusses a wide range of issues, such as the role of religion in the medical profession, various aspects of surgery, transplants, mercy killing, genetic engineering, organ banks, etc.

Regarding transplants from the religious point of view, he supports the practice, saying that scientific advance is a divine privilege and that anyone who obscures this advance is ungrateful to God's grace. He further notes that mercy killing is unlawful religiously, socially, and economically.

LINGUIST NOTES KORAN'S ROLE IN ISLAM

Dr. Mustafa Nasif, a linguist concerned with comparative studies, is interviewed by Sayyid Shahm on the significance of language and the Koran. In the 550-word interview on page 10, he stresses the importance of adhering to Koranic text. He says: "the Arab mind matured only through the Koran and it can only be interpreted through the Koranic text. The Koranic text is what shaped the Arab mind and it is the foundation on which the Islamic culture was built. It is also one of the manifestations of the Arabic language's flexibility, beauty, and richness."

He says Koranic text concerns not only Muslims, but also Arab Muslims, Arab Christians, and Arabs of all other religions. He adds that failing to preserve the Koran "not only makes us lose the language of the Koran but also inter-Arab ties and Arab history."

ISLAMIC FUND CHIEF URGES CONTRIBUTIONS FROM GOVERNMENTS

Page 20 runs a 750-word interview with Shaykh 'Isam Yusuf, head of the Islamic Relief Fund for Palestine and Lebanon, who discusses the fund's activities.

In the interview, conducted by Jamal Salim, he criticizes the reluctance "of wealthy Muslims in general and the Palestinians and Lebanese in particular" to extend financial aid for the Islamic relief fund that "assists poor and displaced people and refugees in Palestine and Lebanon." He "attacks" those who cast doubt on the Islamic relief work and who claim that it discriminates in its offers of aid based on religion, ethnicity, and color. He also urges Islamic governments to allocate part of their budgets for relief projects, "like the Western governments do."

WRITER DEFENDS ISLAM AGAINST TERRORISM CHARGES

A 240-word commentary written by 'Adil Dayf appears on page 20 that cites a NEWSWEEK report on terrorism after the Israeli prime minister's assassination. The writer says the U.S. report "reveals that the West, led by the United States, has done a great injustice to Islam and the Arabs and has stuck on them unjust charges."

He adds: "The Japanese, British, French, and Americans have suffered from unlimited, destructive extremist movements that recognized no moral constraints, yet no terrorism charge was leveled at Japan, France, or even Christianity, Judaism, or any other party. If Islam and the Arabs have paid a high price over the past years because they were unjustly charged with terrorism, the situation must now be corrected and the innocent people must be restored. Every effort must be made to make Islam's truth clear to the entire world and show that it is a religion that renounces all forms of violence and terrorism."

Near the end of the item he says: "As Muslims, we strongly denounce all forms of violence, terrorism, and blood shed. We call for a quiet dialogue, reason, and peaceful negotiations to solve any problems, whether among people in the same country or among countries in international disputes."

COLUMNIST HIGHLIGHTS ROLE OF MOSQUES

In a 400-word article on page 24, the author, Al-Sayyid 'Abd-al-Ra'uf, discusses the role of mosques in various ages of Islam.

He says: "Since the dawn of Islam, the mosque has not been just a place of worship but an integrated institution to guide and serve society. It has not been a seat of government or a place to control society, but a beacon of knowledge and an intellectual and cultural center."

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Warns of 'Cooperation' Between Extremists

PY2311180995 Madrid EFE in Spanish
1543 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Buenos Aires, 23 Nov (EFE) — The now assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin was warned by Yasir 'Arafat, chief of the state of Palestine, that his life was in danger when his intelligence services detected very close cooperation between Jewish and Palestine extremists.

In remarks that are published in today's issue of the Argentine newspaper PAGINA 12, 'Arafat insists that there is "cooperation between Palestine and Israeli extremists" in order to stop the peace process between the two peoples.

Moreover, the Palestine leader also reiterates that "the path toward peace is irreversible" within the region.

'Arafat explains that he himself warned Rabin, who was assassinated on 4 November by an Israeli of the extreme right, "that his life was in danger."

Regarding the existence of "close cooperation" between members of the two groups, 'Arafat adds that "when I told this to the Israelis they did not take it with the necessary seriousness. Before the assassination all attention was placed only on the Palestinian extremists."

The Palestine leader stresses that the assassination did not make him "afraid of death. All the free time would not be enough to recount the times that I have faced it. I consider that I am alive and dead at the same time."

'Arafat states that the line of "communication" that he maintains with new Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres is "continuous and direct," and that this includes matters pertaining to terrorism.

He also clarifies that despite the danger that the extremism "of the two groups" presupposes, the peace process will continue because "it is already a fact between Egypt and Jordan with Israel and between the Palestinians and Israel."

At the same time Syria and Lebanon are maintaining "serious negotiations" with Peres' government in order to achieve closer links," 'Arafat said.

In his opinion, it is the serious economic crisis affecting the Palestinians that is the main obstacle to the peace process in the region.

Ghawshah: Legislative Council Elections 'Deception'

JN2211182295 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1730 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, 22 Nov (SANA)—Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman of Hamas, [the Islamic Resistance Movement], has said that naming the self-rule council, which will be elected in January, the legislative council is a deception. Ghawshah, whose movement refuses to participate in the elections, said that these elections are an implementation of some principles of the Oslo accord, calling for the formation of an executive council to implement the accords.

In a statement to QUDS PRESS today, Ghawshah said that Israel granted the Palestinian Authority some flexibility regarding the election of the council and agreed to increase the number of its members to 82 after Israel became certain that the Palestinian self-rule is exercised over people, not land. Ghawshah said: The Taba accord guaranteed occupation control over most of the land and has kept the settlers in their settlements.

Ghawshah said that Israel can veto any decision made by the council if that decision conflicts with the occupation policy. Ghawshah wondered about the right of 5 million Palestinians in the diaspora to participate in these elections in terms of nomination and voting, noting that no fair elections for the self-rule council can be conducted under Israeli occupation.

Ba'th Party To Participate in Elections

JN2311080195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Arab Socialist Ba'th Party has decided to participate in the upcoming Palestinian legislative elections.

The party's political bureau held an extraordinary meeting in Nabulus last night and decided to form a committee to name the Party's candidates for the elections.

Hamas Cancels Announcement on Election Participation

TA2311111995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in the Gaza Strip has canceled a news conference that it had called to announce the establishment of a political party and its readiness to participate in the elections for the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Mahmud al-Zahhar, a Hamas leader, said that the PA has exploited the organization's readiness to join the political process in order to procrastinate in the dialogue for conciliation.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the PA arrested in the past few days two Hamas activists in Jericho and a Hamas member in Khan Yunus whom it charged with inciting worshipers in the mosque in which he works.

Al-Tahrir Party Issues Edict Against Elections

TA2311141495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The al-Tahrir Party in the territories has issued a religious edict forbidding the residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip from participating in the autonomy council elections. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that many East Jerusalem residents are refusing to register for the elections because they fear this will harm the benefits they are receiving as Israeli citizens.

'Local' Committee Formed To Monitor Elections

JN2311151595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The formation of a local Palestinian committee in charge of monitoring the elections was officially announced during a news conference held at the National Hotel in occupied Jerusalem today. The committee comprises a number of nongovernmental organizations working in the fields of democracy, elections, civic education, and human rights. Its objectives are to protect the rights of voters and candidates and to monitor the registration process and election campaign.

Sha'th on New Israeli Cabinet, Other Issues

JN2311102495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0630 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Telephone Interview with Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, by Fathi al-Barqawi in Jericho; from the "A New Day" program—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Barqawi] Good morning Dr. Sha'th.

[Sha'th] Good morning.

[Al-Barqawi] The Palestinians cannot ignore the new Israeli Government formation. Could you comment on Peres' new government and the peace process on the Palestinian track?

[Sha'th] No doubt the new Israeli Government is an important landmark on the road of the peace process.

There are elements of change and elements of continuity and I believe the elements of continuity are greater. Prime Minister Shim'on Peres is a continuous caller for promoting the peace process. He has always pledged and voiced adherence to continuing this process. He is an important partner of President 'Arafat and the Palestinian leadership during all the stages of negotiations.

Yosi Beilin, the minister in the prime minister's office, is an old partner of Peres and a prominent figure in the peace process and I believe he will have an important role to play with Prime Minister Peres in the peace process.

There is of course Ehud Baraq in the Foreign Ministry.

[Al-Barqawi] And before that.

[Sha'th] And before that during operations which we do not like to recall. But naturally that was a period of struggle and now we are in the peace period. There is a broad political line which must be adhered to. It will be an important element especially in a cabinet whose members and cadres were chosen by Peres personally over a number of years. There is of course Hayim Ramon who returns to the government at the Interior Ministry. He is one of the prominent Israeli political figures who support the peace process and adhere to it and its continuity. I believe that in general, it may be said that this is a cabinet which is committed to the continuation of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. However, this cabinet will remain subject to the test. In the final analysis, we want implementation of what was agreed upon. We want the peace march to continue in accordance with the original Declaration of Principles which engendered the subsequent processes.

We have the right to continue asking this cabinet to show practical indications that it is committed to the peace process with us. We want it to work for a quick release of detainees and to cancel obstacles that had existed during the last days of the previous government. We want it to work for speedy implementation of the redeployment. We have noticed that it adhered to the Janin town date [of redeployment] and the Tulkarm date. We want to see it adhering to the remainder of the process.

Of course we realize that after the sanguinary deed of Rabin's assassination, the Israeli public has changed. There is more support for the peace process. There is more disgust with the actions of the fascist, racist right which wants to undermine the peace process. We cannot help noting that the support for the Palestinian-Israeli peace process among average Israelis has jumped from 50 to 75 percent.

[Al-Barqawi] That is right. But will the participation of religious parties in the cabinet have a negative affect on the peace process?

[Sha'th] There are Israeli peculiarities. There is the religious parties effect on Meretz commitment and its continuation in the government. However, religious participation is limited. Shim'on Peres may see it as a support for his government and the peace path by a Jewish majority in the Knesset. We hope that the benefit Peres will gain from this in terms of support for the peace process will be greater than the cost he is paying for it.

[Al-Barqawi] Dr. Sha'th, I find myself compelled to deviate from the topic of the new Israeli Government and your beautiful discourse on the subject. A few days from now, more exactly at the end of this month, the Barcelona conference will be held. How important is this conference to us?

[Sha'th] It is extremely important. Over the past few months, we have made great strides in our relationship with Europe. We have become more prepared to deal with Europe. From the strategic viewpoint, Europe considers us an important ally in the Arab and the Mediterranean—I mean Levant—region. Europe considers that we in the south and eastern Mediterranean region really represent Europe's primary security concern and economic concern. Europe considers the Palestinians in particular and Palestine to be a new model for a modern state and for progress in this new world. It considers us a possible strategic ally in this region.

Our own interests also lie with Europe from the strategic, economic, political, and security viewpoints. Suffice it to say that 50 percent of the aid received by the Palestinian Authority came from Europe, that European support for us on the Jerusalem issue, on the settlements, the peace process is strong and significant. Therefore, Barcelona embodies all of this. Europe's trust in our readiness will increase after we have established our planning and executive institutions and our quick pace in implementing agreements reached with Europe. We are interning the Barcelona conference expecting more direct aid and more support on regional projects over which there will be competition in terms of quick, positive, and efficient implementation.

Therefore, we are heading for Barcelona to begin a new phase in this relationship, God willing.

[Al-Barqawi] Europe's weight can be noticed through 'Arafat's visits to the Netherlands yesterday and Germany today. I would like to ask: Can we consider the Barcelona conference a continuation of the Amman conference?

[Sha'th] It is only a continuation in terms of the general growth of the regional role which is connected with world blocs. But here the two conferences diverge. The primary player in the Amman conference was the United States. The primary and only player in the Barcelona conference is Europe. The primary role in the Amman projects belonged to the private sector. The primary role in the Barcelona conference is played by the direct European governmental support—$6 billion grants and $6 billion loans to be distributed among 14 countries in the region. I believe there is a difference. Amman was a development bank working on commercial terms; Barcelona will be a development fund on easy terms. Amman is an economic project with political aspects; Barcelona is an economic, political, and cultural alliance.

[Al-Barqawi] There will be another meeting to discuss the Regional Development Bank in Cairo next month.

[Sha'th] Yes, we have always said that we have no direct interest in a development bank. On the other hand, we have direct interest in a development fund with easy terms. However, if such a bank is ever established, we will have no choice but to participate in it.

[Al-Barqawi] Dr. Sha'th, have a good morning and thank you.

[Sha'th] Good morning to you.

Ministry Denounces Earth Moving Works in Hebron

JN2211154695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Information Ministry has denounced the Israeli troops' earth moving operations, which were carried out over the past two days in hundreds of donums of agricultural land in the al-Baq'ah and Wadi al-Muzayyin areas, Hebron Governorate, under the pretext of completing the building of the settlement road No. 60, which extends from the northern to the southern part of the West Bank.

The Ministry also warned against the settlers' attacks on the Islamic holy places, the latest of which was the settlers' attack on the al-'Arba'in Mosque in Hebron yesterday.

The Information Ministry urged the new Israeli Government, headed by Shim'on Peres, to take effective initiatives to stop all settlement activities. It also urged the international community and its legislative bodies to monitor the Israeli violations and to force Israel to respect the agreements and decisions to ensure a balanced peace between the Palestinian people and Israel.

150 Israeli Soldiers Withdraw From Nabulus

JN2311162495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Approximately 150 Israeli soldiers withdrew from Nabulus to the Ari'el settlement today in preparation for the redeployment of Israeli occupation forces in the city. The Israeli occupation police withdrew from their headquarters in the center of Nabulus on 16 November. Palestinian forces are scheduled to enter Nabulus on 14 December.

Deportees in Jordan Seek Return to 'Homeland'

JN2211163295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian deportees in Jordan have urged Israeli Acting Prime Minister Shim'on Peres to cancel all deportation orders and allow them to return to their homeland.

The deportees added that political developments in the region have completely invalidated the deportation penalty and that it was time for the deportees to return to their families.

This came in a message from the Palestinian deportees to Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres. The message was conveyed by Hashim Mahamid, Knesset member and leader of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality.

'Arafat's Activities in Netherlands Reported

JN2311074095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat will address the Global Economic Panel in the Netherlands. 'Arafat will discuss the Middle East future and possible investments in the region.

'Arafat held talks in the Netherlands capital with Prime Minister Wim Kok and his Foreign Minister Hans van Mierlo. They discussed ways to bolster Palestinian-Netherlands ties and the Netherlands Government's political and economic support for the Palestinian people and national authority, and the need for the donor countries to meet their financial commitments to the Palestinian people to enable them to rebuild their economic infra-structure.

'Arafat held a joint news conference with the Netherlands foreign minister in which he praised the role of the Netherlands in supporting Palestinian rights and the peace march. He voiced the hope that the new Israeli Government will pursue the peace march. 'Arafat reiterated the Palestinian side's unceasing commitment to the peace process.

In the Hague, 'Arafat received the Netherlands ministers of communications and trade and a number of Arab businessmen and ambassadors accredited to the Netherlands. Discussions dealt with the economic conditions in the West Bank and the latest developments in the peace process.

Hamas Seen Behind Formation of New Party

MM2311121195 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Nov 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Ali al-Salih: "A Hamas Leader Arrested on Charges of Calling for 'Arafat's Murder"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Palestinian security sources said yesterday that the Palestinian police in Gaza has arrested a Hamas leader on charges of calling for the killing of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat.

The sources added that Ahmad Nimr was arrested last Monday in Khan Yunus on orders from Palestinian Authority General Prosecutor Khalid al-Qidrah.

The sources said that Nimr had pointed in a recent speech to the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, saying that his partner — an implied reference to 'Arafat — should be killed.

At another level, the establishment of the Islamic National Salvation Front party [hizb jabhat al-khalas al-watani al-islami] will be announced in Gaza today. Shaykh Jamil Hamami, who is close to Hamas in the West Bank, has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: "This party will have Islamic orientations and Islamic principles. And it will enjoy the support of the majority of the Palestinian people."

A hundred Islamic figures are participating in the establishment of this party. They include Faraj al-Ghul, Engineer 'Isa al-Minshar, and Dr. Muhammad Shihab, all of whom, according to a source close to the Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, are leading figures in the Muslim Brotherhood movement, that is Hamas.

The party's political bureau will have 14 members, two of them women. Party Deputy Chairman Ahmad al-Sa'ati, who was head of the Hamas Information Office from 1989 through 1991, will become acting chairman until party Chairman Isma'il Abu-Shanab is released from an Israeli jail.

This seems to be the party that Hamas promised to announce "when conditions are favorable."

Party officials have been quoted as saying that the new party will participate in the legislative elections scheduled to be held in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on 20 January.

The party's association with Hamas confirms what Muhammad Nazzal, Hamas' representative in Amman, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in October regarding the formation of a broadly-based Islamic front party whose membership would be open to anyone willing to serve Islamic action.

A number of Hamas leaders will not attend the meeting to be held in the Rashad al-Shawwa culture center in Gaza to announce the party. This was said by a Hamas leader in Gaza, who asked to remain anonymous and declined to reveal the reasons for their boycott of the meeting.

Algeria

Zeroual Reiterates Will To Implement Election Pledges

LD2311131895 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Mr. Liamine Zeroual this morning in Algiers received members of the national commission that coordinated the action of the committees that supported his candidacy for the presidential elections. Addressing the commission, Mr. Zeroual affirmed his determination, after officially assuming his task as president of the republic and of all Algerians, quickly to give substance to the commitments he had made before God and the people. He urged members of the commission to remain mobilized to carry out the national project inspired by the principles and values of the glorious November revolution. Here is a report from Mohamed Chellouch:

[Chellouch] [passage omitted] In an address he made on this occasion, President Zeroual affirmed his strong determination to give substance to all his pledges, saying: After officially assuming my task as president of the republic, I will be working with renewed vigor and determination to give substance in the field to all the commitments I had made before God and the people. The president-elect underlined that the era of genuine pluralism dictated to all loyal nationalists who believed in the national program to remain mobilized in the field, and forcefully to see to it that the national correction march and national rallying are reinforced. Mr. Liamine Zeroual reaffirmed that he did not belong to any group, and that his only group was Algeria. He stressed that this conviction of his was an answer to rumors echoed by some people following the elections, and that this, in our [the correspondent's] view meant ruling out the idea of forming a political party.

Mr. Liamine Zeroual's address also forcefully showed a conviction of the need for a change and a break with past practices as he said: After the lesson given by the Algerian people, time has come to move toward the realization of the objectives of the national program and the hopes of the people for peace, stability, and national unity; time has come for the slogan we uphold to become reality and for us to give substance to it. Mr. Liamine Zeroual further said: I do not believe in empty slogans; we must eliminate lies and reveal realities even if the latter may be bitter, for it is realities that enable us to set up priorities.

FIS' Kebir Notifies Zeroual of Readiness To Talk

Takes 'Important Reconciliation Step'

MM2311163995 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Nov 95 pp 1, 6

[Report by Jamal Khashuqji: "Kebir Tells AL-HAYAH: My Letter to Zeroual Enjoys Salvation Front Leadership's Support"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Shaykh Rabeh Kebir, chairman of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] Executive Committee abroad, has told AL-HAYAH that his recent initiative concerning dialogue and cooperation with [Algerian] President Liamine Zeroual "enjoys the support of the FIS leadership inside and outside the country." And I hope that "this initiative will bring good." He pointed out that the past "four years of violence" are enough, and the time has come "for Zeroual to implement his conviction vis-a-vis reconciliation, relying on his popular support."

In an important "reconciliation" step Kebir sent an open letter to President Zeroual yesterday in which he expressed "the FIS' constant readiness for dialogue, consultation, and cooperation with the regime and the opposition in order to eliminate the causes of tension in our society, alleviate our people's suffering, achieve their aims as regards peace, prosperity, justice, freedom, and democracy, and protect posterity from bloody conflicts."

It is noted that the letter addressed Zeroual as "Mr. President," and the tone was conciliatory. A figure close to Shaykh Kebir described it as a "historic letter which we hope the regime will treat positively, on the grounds that it is an opportunity to bring about peace in our country."

Kebir expressed in his letter the FIS' desire to reach an understanding regardless of what it terms as the regime's excesses during the elections. He said: "After your election as president of the republic — and we do not want to note the conditions in which these elections were held and the results, because you know them — the Algerian people's message during the boycott does not differ from their message during the participation, apart from the method of expression. Because everyone's aim is peace, democracy, and escape from repression and poverty. We pray to Almighty God to make this event, which has far-reaching effects, an opportunity for good and blessing for Algeria with all its people and regions." He went on: "We regard as auspicious God's gift in sparing Algerian blood during the elections. We have prayed to Him to complement his gift with security, faith, and Islam in all our days."

He praised Zeroual's statement that "a solution to the crisis is bigger than any individual or group." He added that "any sincere endeavor to return to this noble Muslim people is bound to produce nothing but good." He said that,"if a section of the people has expressed joy [at the elections], there is still a sizable section of deprived and oppressed people."

He urged Zeroual to use "this popular support, which could be a great opportunity for both the regime and the opposition to overcome the obstacles that prevented national dialogue from achieving its aims vis-a-vis peace, freedoms, and accord."

Kebir told AL-HAYAH that "the two detained shaykhs, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, would have approved of the initiative if we had been allowed to contact them. We are working within the framework of what we announced and agreed upon before." He pointed out that contacts with the detained leaders have been cut off for several months.

Kebir stressed that the FIS currently deals with Zeroual "as head of the Algerian state, regardless of the circumstances that surrounded the elections."

On the extent of his optimism about whether the regime will respond positively to his initiative, he said: "Sincere people still have a hope, and we hope that this initiative will bring good, even though there has been nothing specific to inspire optimism except the fact that Mr. Zeroual announced in his program his desire to restore peace and security to the country."

He added, "we say with the Algerian people that four years are enough," meaning the four years of violence since the legislative elections were canceled in 1992. The FIS won the first round. Kebir said that the results of the elections "should bolster the position of Mr. Zeroual, who announced before assuming power that he had a plan for dialogue, and perhaps his hopes were at odds with with the positions of others. But the time has come for him to implement his conviction as regards reconciliation, if he really wants to do so, relying on his popular support."

On the initiatives the FIS expects from the regime, Kebir said: "We demand a real dialogue. The FIS is the main party to the crisis, and thus dialogue must be with its leaders. The shaykhs and all detainees must be released. And serious negotiations must be held, freedoms granted, and security pressure lifted in order to spare blood and eliminate all the causes that opened the doors to violence, which has reached its ugliest.form over the past year." Kebir added: "Many people would be mistaken if they interpreted the signs of joy and the shots fired in Algiers' streets following the announcement of the election results as the people's joy. It was actually the joy of a section of the people who have arms and bullets. They expressed their joy at the expense of an oppressed and repressed majority. The real joy is when all the people's sons rejoice." Kebir urged the Algerian president to "deal positively with our initiative because our orientation is serious and sincere." Asked about his use of the phrase "the FIS' willingness to cooperate with the regime," which is used for the first time, he said: "Cooperation is a natural fruit of dialogue and consultation. This is what we expect and are hoping for."

On the effect of recent developments on relations among the "national covenant" parties, Kebir said: "Contacts are continuing with our partners in the national covenant. And a limited meeting was held in Germany recently among a number of parties. I hope that another meeting will be held soon to assess the situation after the elections." Asked whether he can participate in such a meeting, he said: "The German position is vague. It is clear that they are under great pressure, because legally they have no right to prevent me from making statements or attending a press conference. But they tend to exaggerate to some extent. I hope that this will change soon."

A source close to Kebir refused to describe the FIS' letter as a change in its position. The source said: "We have not changed the principles from which we proceeded. From the outset the FIS has announced its willingness to engage in a dialogue and to work for a solution acceptable to all parties, even though it continued to adhere to the Algerian people's rights." The source pointed out that the FIS' first position on dialogue was announced following the cancellation of the elections by its spokesman, Shaykh Abdelkader Hachani, who is currently in prison, then through the initiative of sending Abdelkader Sahraoui to Algiers in November 1992 to initiate a dialogue, but the regime rejected this initiative.

The source said that the FIS did not even insist on the question of resuming the canceled legislative elections, even though they expressed the people's opinion and were held freely and honestly. Because the FIS realized that it was difficult to resume the elections a long time after their cancellation. The regime rejected all initiatives, most recently the Rome initiative and the national covenant agreement, since it wants to settle the situation by force. The source pointed out that the FIS "has long been aware that a security settlement to the crisis is impossible, and that neither party can achieve a military victory to abolish the other party. We hope that the regime will realize this soon."

French TV Airs Kebir Letter

LD2311133995 Paris LCI Television in French 1000 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A significant taboo was overcome last night in the Algerian civil war. For the first time the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] recognized the legitimacy of the newly elected president, Liamine Zeroual. Helene Devynck reports:

[Devynck] This letter marks a major political change in Algeria, less than a week after the elections. The FIS recognized Liamine Zeroual's legitimacy for the first time.

The letter, which is directly addressed to Mr. President, is signed by Rabeh Kebir, representative of the FIS abroad. It was made public in Bonn. Its tone is conciliatory, and the movement recognized the popular support for the head of state. None of the usual demands of the FIS, such as the end of repression or the release of its leaders, is mentioned.

The day after the presidential elections, Rabeh Kebir made an appeal for negotiation:

[Begin Kebir recording, in Arabic with superimposed French translation] We hope that there will be a peaceful solution in favor of peace and security if the authorities adopt a policy of dialogue and negotiation with the authentic political opposition. [end recording]

The FIS had refused until now to recognize the legitimacy of the authorities following the cancellation of the 1992 elections. The high turnout last week was seen by all parties as the expression of the Algerians' desire for peace.

[Here follows the translation of Rabeh Kebir's letter from the video presentation of the letter in Arabic]

Islamic Salvation Front.

Open letter to President Liamine Zeroual,

May peace be upon you,

Mr. President,

After your election as president of the republic — we do not wish to return to the circumstances in which the elections took place nor to their result, as you are aware of them, the difference between the people's messages through the boycott and participation is only in the way of expressing it — everybody's goal is peace, democracy, and freeing ourselves from subjugation and poverty. We ask God almighty to turn this event into a happy beginning, bringing blessings to Algeria and to all its people.

We were happy to see God bestowing on us his blessings with the lack of bloodshed during the elections. We implored Him to continue His blessings with security, faith, safety, and Islam. We also received with satisfaction your statement on the heavy responsibility placed on you by the electorate and your conviction that the task of resolving the crisis is greater than [the consideration of] any individual, group, or category, and hence your determination to work so that all Algerians can claim their role in the construction of Algeria.

We are convinced that any attempt — if genuine — to become a truly Muslim nation will only bring good.

As well as those who were lucky enough to express their joy [after the election], others, not in the least a minority, remained deprived and oppressed. We think that this popularity you have gained could be a significant opportunity for both the authorities and the opposition to overcome the obstacles that have prevented the many attempts at national dialogue from achieving their goal of securing a return to peace, liberties, and national conciliation.

Finally, we stress our constant readiness for dialogue, consultation, and cooperation with the authorities and the opposition in order to remove the causes of tension in our society, to eliminate the suffering of our people, to achieve their aspiration for peace, good, justice, freedom, and democracy, and to secure future generations against bloody conflicts.

May peace and God's mercy be upon you.

[Signed] Bonn, 28 Jumada al-Thani 1416, corresponding to 21 November 1995

On behalf of the Islamic Salvation Front, Rabeh Kebir, chairman of the [words indistinct]

FIS To Seek Cease-Fire

LD2311094695 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 0700 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] indirectly recognized President Zeroual's legitimacy after the Algerian presidential elections. Rabeh Kebir, president of the FIS executive abroad, invited the Algerian president to take part in a dialogue.

This was confirmed by Anouar Haddam, so-called representative of the FIS in Washington. Anouar Haddam's statement to Philippe Reltien is more ambiguous than Rabeh Kebir's, but he too speaks of negotiations:

[Begin Haddam recording] There was not a single incident anywhere in Algeria on 16 November. This shows that the armed movement is very well organized, and they decided not to carry out military actions so as not to harm civilians.

Now, what is happening after these so-called elections? As far as we are concerned, nothing has changed. The actual authorities are the same ones. As a political party, we are still prepared to sit down at the negotiating table in the context of a national contract for the restoration of constitutional legality where the military institutions must submit to duly elected civilian authorities.

In addition, the first phase will be — after a meeting of the FIS leaders with leaders of the armed movement... [pauses] We shall call for a cease-fire before we sit down to the negotiating table. [end recording]

The Algerian president has not as yet officially answered the covert approaches of the FIS Islamists.

Algerian security forces have shot dead about 20 armed Islamists since last Sunday.

FIS Reportedly Split Over Elections

LD2411100995 Paris Radio France International in French 0730 GMT 24 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] in exile are split after the election of President Zeroual. Last Monday, Rabeh Kebir said that Zeroual was certainly a valid interlocutor for dialogue with the opposition. Another leader abroad, Anouar Haddam, has talked of treason, saying neither the FIS nor the Mujahidin [armed Islamic rebels] are responsible for Kebir's statement.

President Zeroual who was officially proclaimed as the winner of the elections yesterday by the Constitutional Council with 61.3 percent of the votes, announced that he will address the nation within the next few days.

Constitutional Council Gives Official Election Results

LD2311161395 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1510 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Announcement on results of the presidential elections of 16 November 1995 by Said Bouchair, chairman of the Constitutional Council, in Djenane El Mithaq in Algiers — live].

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The results of the first round of elections on Thursday 23 Jumada al-Thaniyah 1416 A.H, corresponding to 16 November 1995 are the following:

Number of registered voters: 15,969,904

Numbers of votes cast: 12,087,281

Turnout: 75.69%

Valid votes cast: 11,619,532

Absolute majority: 5,809,767

Results:

— Mr. Noureddine Boukrouh: 443,144 votes

— Mr. Liamine Zeroual: 7,088,616 votes

— Mr. Said Saadi: 1,115,796 votes

— Mr. Mahfoud Nahnah: 2,971,974 votes

Given that Mr. Liamine Zeroual had secured in the first round the absolute majority of all valid votes cast, and that in accordance with article 68 of the Constitution he has won the elections, the Constitutional Council declares Mr. Liamine Zeroual as president of the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria, and he will assume his task as soon as he takes the constitutional oath, in accordance of article 72 of the Constitution [passage omitted]

FLN Leader Congratulates President

LD2311182995 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abdelhamid Mehri, secretary general of the National Liberation Front [FLN], has sent a message to President Liamine Zeroual in which he says: As you are assuming the highest responsibilities of the state, after a popular wave supported you and expressed its high hopes for the restoration of civil peace, freedom, and democracy, it is my pleasure to convey to you our congratulations and wishes for success in the endeavors you will undertake to fulfil the high hopes of the Algerian people.

In his message sent to the president of the republic, the FLN secretary general added: We reaffirm to you the readiness of the FLN, which remains loyal to the principles of the November 1954 revolution which and is committed to a comprehensive national dialogue, to contribute, with all political forces, to the success of every national effort to extricate the country from the serious crisis through which it is passing.

Egypt

U.S. Monitoring of Election Campaigns Reported

NC2311070095 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 20 Nov 95 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Embassy in Cairo has entrusted several diplomats to supervise a team of experts including Egyptian employees to follow up on all the developments in the electoral constituencies in Cairo and the other governorates. The Embassy is preparing daily reports on the most important election campaigns. It is also preparing a chart indicating the popularity of all the parties and independent candidates. The team scans the national and party newspapers to probe trends in the current elections.

In its report, the U.S. Embassy is concentrating on the constituencies of 'Ayn Shams, Imbabah, and Upper Egypt, which are considered strongholds of the Islamist movement.

Willingness To Join Bosnian Peacekeepers Signaled

NC2311094695 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Egypt has expressed willingness to participate in the peacekeeping force that will be deployed in Bosnia-Herzegoniva following the formal signing of the Bosnian peace plan reached in Dayton, Ohio, two days ago.

In a statement to the UN Security Council last night, Ambassador Nabil al-'Arabi, Egypt's permanent representative to the United Nations, described the initialing of an agreement by the parties involved in the Bosnian conflict, for a comprehensive political settlement, as an important landmark that will help end the human tragedy in the Balkans.

Musa Comments on Sending Troops

NC2311181795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that the dispatch of additional Egyptian troops for peacekeeping duties in Bosnia depends on the Security Council resolutions, the UN role, and the new arrangements that will be implemented in accordance with the new peace agreement signed in Dayton, Ohio, which will end three and a half years of war in the Balkans.

In statements to the media this afternoon, Musa said that it also depends on consultations among the Islamic countries and on Egypt's own decision on such a step.

Gunmen Fire on Envoy's Residence in Sofia

NC2311131295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sofia, 23 Nov (MENA)—Unidentified gunmen fired on the residence of Egyptian Ambassador in Sofia Mayy Muhammad Abu-al-Dhahab on Monday [20 November] night.

Security sources in Sofia say the Bulgarian police are searching for three people who carried out the operation. The sources added that the police identified one of the culprits after a guard took down his license plate number.

Paper Criticizes Groups Claiming Embassy Attack

NC2311075595 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 23 Nov 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "The Party of Satan," an editorial in the newspaper AL-AHRAM says: With deep sorrow, Egypt has buried its five martyrs who fell victim to treachery and vileness. Their funeral constituted a referendum on this country's future and exemplified the position: No to terrorism, no to violence, no to misguided ideology.

The ignoble rush by three terrorist organizations, each claiming responsibility for the attack, demonstrates to the Egyptian public that all of these groups are in the same rotten basket. If the leaders of these vile groups, whether at home or abroad, are drinking a toast to celebrate the bombing of the embassy and the killing of innocent people, then they are writing the final chapter of this squalid farce and digging their graves with their own hands. The world will not allow its fate to fall into the hands of snakes whose chief concern in life is to spew their venom into the minds of inexperienced youths, play a game of death with them, and make them carry out criminal acts rejected by all heavenly creeds.

Satan is manipulating young minds and making them believe that killing innocent people is a sacred task. Satan is dancing and rejoicing at his success in infiltrating the minds of young men who could have been useful to their nation if they had been free of his ploys.

It is great sedition that makes young men believe that only they are right and the rest of the world is misguided.

Court Hands Down Verdicts, Closes MB Headquarters

NC2311090995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0847 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 November (MENA)—The Higher Military Court today handed down verdicts in the first part of the case involving the disbanded Muslim Brotherhood [MB]. In this part of the case 49 Brotherhood members stood trial. One of the defendants is a fugitive.

The court sentenced three defendants to five years imprisonment with hard labor and 31 defendants to three years imprisonment with hard labor. It acquitted 15 defendants.

The court ordered the closure of the headquarters of the dissolved Muslim Brotherhood group at 1 al-Tawfiqiyah Street, Cairo.

Action Against MB Detailed; Paper Closed

NC2311115395 Paris AFP in English 1124 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Report by Hassan Mekki]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Huckstep, Egypt, Nov 23 (AFP)—An Egyptian military court on Thursday [23 November] jailed more than 50 members of the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood [MB] and shut the group's headquarters and newspaper, in a crackdown a week before elections.

The court at Huckstep military base north of Cairo sentenced the 54 Brotherhood members to terms of up five years of hard labour for five leading members, for running an illegal organisation.

In two separate trials, 40 others were given three years of hard labour, including Muhsin Radi who is abroad and was tried in absentia. Nine others were sentenced to three years in jail.

Among the five leaders with the maximum terms were 'Isam al-'Aryan, the number two in the doctors' union, Muhammad al-Sayyid Habib, a former MP, and 'Abd-al-Mun'im Fattuh, head of the Arab doctors' union.

Twenty-seven defendants were acquitted out of a total of 81 people on trial from the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's main fundamentalist group, with one defendant sentenced in both cases.

The accused were on trial for "directing an illegal organisation aiming to impede the rule of law and constitution," a charge which could have earned them life prison terms.

After the verdicts against the Brotherhood members whom Amnesty International has termed "prisoners of conscience," the court ordered the closure of the group's main offices in Cairo and its weekly newspaper AL-DA'WAH.

Less than a week ahead of general elections in which the group has fielded 160 candidates, the court ordered the confiscation of all documents and goods in the Brotherhood's offices.

Outside the military base where some 1,500 family members and sympathizers held a demonstration, wives and sisters of the jailed Brotherhood members rolled in the dirt in anguish when the verdicts were announced.

"This verdict is a dangerous development, it's a step backwards for the democracy we want to develop in Egypt," protested Majdi Husayn, director of the bi-weekly AL-SHA'B run by the Labour party allies of the Brotherhood.

"They committed no criminal acts and have not resorted to violent. It's an unjust verdict from an illegal court because it's a verdict against freedom of thought and an ideology which makes no call for violence," he said.

President Husni Mubarak has come under fire, including from Amnesty International, for sending the Brotherhood members to military court which usually rules on cases connected to Islamic militant unrest.

The Muslim Brotherhood, set up in 1929, says a police crackdown this year ending almost 20 years of state tolerance is aimed at scuppering the group's chances in general elections next Wednesday.

The Brotherhood, which has been officially banned since 1954, denies any connection to Muslim militants in its policies aimed at setting up a state based on the Islamic laws of Shari'ah.

Amnesty International on Monday urged Egypt to "immediately release" the Brotherhood members.

"The fact that some of the defendants had announced before their arrest that they would run in upcoming parliamentary elections heightens fears that their arrests and trials are politically motivated," Amnesty said.

An Amnesty delegation attended sessions of the two Brotherhood trials. "These mass trials of civilians before military courts violate some of the most fundamental requirements of international law," it said.

But Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi insists the Brotherhood, while saying it opposes violence, is linked to armed extremists waging a three-year campaign against the government.

The campaign has cost more than 900 lives and Islamic militants also claimed a suicide car-bomb attack on the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad on Sunday that killed another 10 people.

Voters Urged To Be Alert To 'Impostors' After Attack

NC2211142795 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Commentary by Zayn al-Ja'fari: "The Attack on the Egyptian Embassy and the Bankruptcy of Terrorism"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In a solemn ceremony the Egyptian people yesterday bade farewell to the martyrs of terrorism who fell victim to the mean terrorist attack against the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad. The thousands of marchers who took part in the funeral of the victims reiterated their condemnation of terrorism, demanded retribution, and reaffirmed their backing for President Husni Mubarak in his policies to confront terrorists at home and abroad. [passage omitted]

The treacherous attack in which innocent people serving their mother country of Egypt abroad fell victim is unmistakable proof of the bankruptcy of terrorism and a clear indication that the terrorists have failed in their operations inside Egypt. [passage omitted]

The attack has come at a crucial time, a few days before the People's Assembly elections. Hence it is incumbent on the Egyptian people to be aware of the conduct of those who claim to belong to Islam, while Islam has nothing to do with them or their action. The Egyptian people should exercise extreme caution when casting their votes so as not to give these impostors the chance to continue their wrongdoings and undermine Egyptian interests, whether at home or abroad.

This treacherous attack has succeeded only in increasing the Egyptian people's determination to confront terrorism and terrorists through every method until it is completely uprooted, not only in Egypt, but in the world at large.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi: Dayton Accord U.S. 'Election Propaganda'

LD2211210495 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Statement by "brother leader of the revolution" Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi to JANA "about the agreement signed in the United States concerning Bosnia"; date not given — read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] The success of the agreement signed yesterday on an air base on the outskirts of the American town of Dayton concerning Bosnia-Herzegovina cannot be guaranteed for several reasons. These reasons include its use in U.S. election propaganda which was the fundamental and strong factor for reaching this rushed and immature agreement — not the sympathy for the peoples of Yugoslavia.

This agreement, which is linked to the election propaganda, is considered as an inhuman action because it is using people for the propaganda which precedes elections. Its nature is similar to that of election propaganda. So, what kind of democracy is this and what kind of humanity does the world have now?

If this agreement stipulates the return of all ethnic groups to their positions, what was the justification of those bloody wars? Why was this solution not found since the beginning? This shows the severe contradiction between the solution and what is currently taking place now, and confirms that Bosnia is an Islamic country under U.S. influence.

If this agreement came to indicate that Muslims are a minority in Bosnia-Herzegovina, then the Islamic countries which are under U.S. influence are endeavoring to conceal this. So, where is the country for which they had been waging a holy war? These countries were using deception to justify their obedience to America.

Is the military force which they announced they are sending for the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina? It signifies in fact the Western occupation of Yugoslavia. Furthermore, the fate of the Third World will acquire this form.

We warn the nonaligned countries against the dangers of this fate and against the true image of the West.

UN Delegation Circulates Statement on UN Sanctions

LD2311074195 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0705 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 23 Nov (JANA) — A news statement distributed this evening by the mission of the Jamahiriyah at the United Nations expressed the Great Jamahiriyah's astonishment for the extension by the so-called Security Council of the unjust measures imposed on the Great Jamahiriyah. The statement also said that the Jamahiriyah used to believe that the continuation of the intransigence by the three western states and the renewal of these unjust measures did not serve the interests of the families of the victims of the Lockerbie incident, nor did it take into account the sufferings which the Libyan Arab people were enduring as a result of these measures. The statement that was circulated reaffirmed that the renewal of these unjust measures once more did not attach any importance to the repeated appeals by international and regional organizations — the Arab League, the OAU, the Nonaligned Movement — a matter which calls for requesting these organizations to reconsider these measures and demand their removal.

JANA Editor on UN Sanctions Extension

LD2311144395 Tripoli JANA in English 1430 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli (al Harth [Nov] 23) (JAMAHARIYA NEWS AGENCY) — The so-called Security Council has once again, succumbed to pressure exerted by the three Western states and renewed the unfair sanctions imposed on the great Jamahariya as the chairman of the Security Council for this month has announced that following the consultations made by the Council it was concluded that the necessary conditions for reducing or cancelling these measures are not there.

JANA's political affairs editor commented on this action and said: We have been astonished about last night's announcement by the so-called Security Council regarding the renewal of the unfair sanctions imposed on the great Jamahariya. This reflects once again the continued hegemony of America over this Council as the renewal was made despite the positive response by the great Jamahariya and its civilised handling of the so-called Lockerbie case. This position had been ratified by all international and regional organisations, the latest of which was the support for the great Jamahariya which emerged from the Nonaligned Movement which includes 110 member states as it had decided in its recent summit in Columbia that if America and the Western states invovled did not respond to the resolutions of regional organisations calling for the lifting of these sanctions then member states of the movement will not be obliged to implement the unfair sanctions against the great Jamahariya.

The editor confirmed that this action re-affirms the serious diversion of the so-called Security Council which is manipulated by America and being distanced from laws, pricniples, regulations and justice which has been accepted by the members of the General Assembly. That also confirms that the United Nations and its councils have lost their credibility before all the nations of the world, which have no more confidence in the future as they witness the diversion of institutions from their goals and the violations of their charters, laws and principles.

Daily Urges Withdrawal From UN

LD2311164595 Tripoli JANA in English
1441 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli (Al Havoh [November] 23) — JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — The Libyan daily 'AL SHAMS' has called for withdrawal from the United Nations and for the abolition of anything related to the United Nations and total disregard for it.

It said that the continued membership of the United Nations is no longer justified after the exposure of its unfair practices against the Libyan Arab people who put forward numerous positive initiatives to solve the so-called Lockerbie case.

In an article headlined 'Call for Withdrawal From the United Nations' it said : As Libyan citizens we do not understand why we recently celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations and why we are deceiving ourselves as the organisation which was basically established to dispell disputes and lay down the basis of international peace and the [words indistinct] the spirit of understanding and dialogue. This organisation has lost its legitimacy and is no more than a mouthpiece for colonialist quarters and a tool to implement the domination over smaller nations. It is an organization with no credibility. It is a body with no justice in its texts. This makes us loose [as received] the justification for moral dealings and and [as received] cooperation with it. Citizens like us who suffered direct damage through the unfair sanctions which deprived us of the possibility of saving a dear friend of ours who was injured in a road accident. [sentence as received] Because of the air ban we could not save him. A man like me could not hold any respect for such organisations — in fact we are obliged to ridicule everyone when we hear them speak during the 50th anniversary of the United Nations about justice and equality and preaching in the forums of the United Nations about international peace and understanding at a time when the organisation goes ahead with its unfair and unjust practices against us.

The proper stance, which we have to adopt, is by the Great Jamahiriyah responding to this call in respect of withdrawal from the United Nations, therefore, we are submitting this issue to the masses of the Basic People's Congresses, the masters of decision-making who have to shoulder the responsibility of taking the decision to close down the offices of the United Nations in the Great Jamahiriyah and expel all its official from our homeland as those officials promote the United Nations projects.

The Great Jamahiriyah has to wind up its relationships with this organisation behind which anti-freedom and anti-peace forces are covering themselves.

The newspaper AL SHAMS added that the continued membership of the United Nations is no longer justified after the exposition of its unfair and unjust practices against our Libyan-Arab people who offered numerous positive initiatives to solve the so-called Lockerbie case. The case in which the nations of the globe expressed their support for Libya through regional continental official and popular organisations.

We are calling on the masses of the Basic People's Congresses to act towards terminating anything related to the United Nations and our disregard for the organisation and its programmes and the non-participation in its programmes and refusal to pay any financial contributions or subscriptions for it because it is adopting a hostile position towards the Libyan people.

We also call on all popular organisations and all secretariats and Jamahari institutions to rise to the level of challenge and refuse all commitments and dealings with foreign companies whose governments and states implement the unfair sanctions against us and the abolition of all contracts and deals signed with the aim of depriving them from the billions of dollars allocated for the ambitious and strategic projects in our country.

The publication of this call will enhance the courageous will of defiance with the aim of placing the masses before their historical responsibilities, particularly as they suffer from the negative impacts of the unfair sanctions concerning health, road accidents, health care, transport and movement of people and other hardships could not be ratified by any logic or human law.

Finally it is becoming a disgrace to remain as members in an organisation which does not hesitate to apply injustice over us.

Oil Minister on Resolution 986, UN, Husayn Kamil

Sets Conditions for Compliance With 986

AU2311153095 Paris AFP in English
1514 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Report by Isabelle Hourcade]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vienna, Nov 23 (AFP) — Iraq is prepared to accept UN Security Council resolution 986 authorizing a partial resumption of Iraqi oil exports for humanitarian purposes, if two changes are made, Iraqi Oil Minister 'Amir Muhammad Rashid said Thursday [23 November] in Vienna.

The resolution would allow Iraq to export a billion dollars' worth of crude oil every three months, which oil industry sources say would represent exports on the order of 700,000 to 750,000 barrels a day at present prices.

The minister said Iraq was ready to accept the deal if sections 6 and 8 of the resolution are changed. Section 6 deals with distribution of humanitarian aid in Kurdish areas, while section 8 concerns oil exports mainly through the pipeline ending in Turkey and crossing those same areas. Baghdad objects to being forced to export most of its oil through Turkey.

Northern Iraq has been controlled by the Kurds in defiance of Baghdad since 1991.

Rashid said that if the Security Council and the UN secretary general could assure Iraq that they would amend the resolution, or would take those two "vital concerns" of the Iraqi government into account, "Iraq will be ready to apply the resolution".

But he also expressed skepticism about holding new negotiations on the question, which would be "futile" unless the UN modifies its position.

Rashid expressed much greater optimism about the possibility that Iraq would be in a position soon to comply with the UN resolutions concerning its arms programs.

"We are advancing very rapidly toward application of section 22" of UN resolution 687, implementation of which would allow complete lifting of the sanctions on Iraq imposed at the time of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, and particularly of the oil embargo, he said. "We are settling the pending problems".

He said that if he took an "optimistic" view, Rolf Ekeus, who heads the UN special panel dealing with Iraqi disarmament, would find Iraq in compliance at the start of 1996 - though a "pessimistic" view would put that finding at the end of next year.

"Once it is acknowledged that Iraq is meeting its obligations — as I hope Mr. Ekeus will find in the near future — the United States and Great Britain will no longer have any reasons to refuse to lift sanctions", he said.

The Iraqi oil minister said his country might boost its production capacity from 2.5 million to 3.5 million barrels a day "in less than two years", and could export two million barrels a day once the embargo is completely lifted.

When asked about the ability of the Organization of Petroleum Countries to facilitate Iraq's return to the world oil market, Rashid said he had "no reason to doubt it".

The Iraqi daily BABIL, run by President Saddam Husayn's son 'Udayy, warned Thursday against accepting Resolution 986, which it said "aims to undermine Iraq, its political system and its leader."

Its comments came as senior French diplomat Denis Bouchard met in Baghdad with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz in the hope of persuading the Iraqi government to reconsider its stance.

BABIL compared Bouchard's mission to a visit by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev last year, which resulted in Iraq recognising Kuwait in the vain hope of securing a lifting of UN sanctions.

Discusses Relationship With UN

MM2311164695 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
23 Nov 95 p 4

[Interview with Oil Minister 'Amir Rashid by Randah Taqiyy-al-Din in Vienna; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Taqiyy-al-Din] Is there any hope of Iraq accepting Resolution 986 after France sent a delegation to persuade you to do so?

[Rashid] Iraq's position is clear. Iraq has honored its commitments under Resolution 986. The special commission's view is that there is a problem in this connection and we will solve it soon. When the draft resolution was submitted to the Security Council in 1995 the majority of the Security Council members had reservations regarding the articles pertaining to Iraq's sovereignty, but the Americans put tremendous pressure on the Security Council with the view that if the U.S. draft was not passed as it was, the United States would use its right of veto. The U.S. Administration drafted the resolution in such a way as to be rejected by Iraq. It did not want Iraq to export its oil. One article led to the Iraqi reservation and remarks. It concerns the northern region of Iraq, the three governorates. It was a draft which precipitated the secession of these governorates and clearly supported the partition of Iraq indirectly. No state which respects its sovereignty and territorial integrity would accept that.

Why that American insistence on Article 6? The second point is that there was flagrant interference. One part of Article 8 stipulates that the major part of the oil to be exported must pass through Turkey, which may or may not be the case. Here again, the American insistence on imposing that article is not only tantamount to interference in (internal) affairs but also a preference for the northern governorates. If it is a resolution on humanitarian aid and revenue for the Iraqi people, why should the resolution contain an article which bears no relation to the subject matter? Why should it be used to serve a political end. The aim is to block the implementation of Article 22 so that the Iraqi Government would reject the humanitarian resolution for helping the people. Talks have been held with the (UN) secretary general who, under that resolution, is authorized to prepare the mechanism and methods of implementing the resolution in coordination with the Iraqi Government, and to keep the Security Council informed. It has been said in the media: Why does Iraq not sit down with the secretary general and see if the negotiations would succeed. Well, how could Iraq enter into discussions while the main objections on which the Iraqi rejection was based are still valid? What would be the use of discussing that matter? If there was a new position relating to amendment of the resolution in such a way as to take the Iraqi reservations into consideration, then Iraq would be prepared to talk.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] When Husayn Kamil left Iraq you told the UN Special Commission that you had hidden some things and then you gave Ekeus some information on armament before or after 1990.

[Rashid] Let me explain the relationship with the UN Special Commission. Under Resolution 687 Iraq was required to supply information within 15 days after April 1991 when the war ended. Iraq has so far provided thousands, tens of thousands of items of information, and it is still being said that Iraq did not provide enough information. The aim of the information is to put the Special Commission in the picture in terms of Iraq's capabilities in order to decide what should be destroyed, what should be modified, and what should be moved out of Iraq. That was done for all arms, including the nuclear and chemical activities. So, if that was done, as the Special Commission and the Atomic Energy Commission admit it was, the aim of Resolution 687 has been fulfilled. Second, Resolution 715 is a control system. A control mechanism has been established with the contribution and cooperation of Iraq, as admitted by the Special Commission. Now in Iraq there is an effective, strict, vast, and multifaceted system that prevents Iraq from carrying out any activity.

The main objectives have therefore been fulfilled. So the remaining issue open to discussion is that of the past program, that is what Iraq did in the past. We supplied much information, but it emerged after Husayn Kamil's defection that he had taken some measures without the leadership's knowledge in order to deny the Special Commission some information pertaining to past programs which have nothing to do with the current system or with the control system. When we learned about that after his defection we informed the Special Commission and the International Agency and we asked them to come to Iraq to discuss any concealed information and documents not given to them. We supplied that information and scores of documents and materials that had been hidden by Husayn Kamil. Now we are continuing to answer all the detailed questions of the Special Commission.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] You now personally lead the negotiations with Ekeus.

[Rashid] I am responsible for the file relating to the UN Special Commission in charge of disarmament. On Husayn Kamil's orders, the known concealed biological issue (program), which is a part of the biological armament program, was not given to the Special Commission. After the flight of that traitor, that was given to the Special Commission in the context of the main program. There were unimportant programs (in the biological field) representing activities which were fruitless at the time. They were attempts by several specialists to achieve something in the war with Iran. That information was also concealed but it was of no value. That too was given to the Special Commission and that is what caused the exaggeration and the claim that the Iraqi program was vast and massive. There were exaggerations and extremist behavior. The truth is that these were just attempts by specialists who tried to attempt to end the Iraq-Iran war, which had been going on for a long time, with any means of weapons of mass destruction. They worked in the biological field without any results. As I explained to you, we had one complete program which was concealed by Husayn Kamil from the Armament Committee. They were told that it was a major program but that it had not reached the stage of incorporating it into a bomb or missile, but actually it was developed into a bomb or a missile before the Gulf war. So that was the case in relation to the biological issue.

As regards the issue of nuclear weapons, as it appeared after the flight of Husayn Kamil, there was a program after August 1990, and the nuclear armament program was in force before August 1990. Husayn Kamil gave instructions for the initiation of a program which he called a crash program [last two words in English], in other words urgent. It was scientifically unbalanced and bound to fail but he wanted to produce a nuclear weapon in a short period of time to be used in the war with other states and with the United States. Actually, that program was a failure from the beginning and produced no results. It could not possibly have produced results over a short period of time. On the chemical issue and the missiles, there was some hidden information but it was of a very secondary and exaggerated nature. The Special Commission was told about the VX issue but the period of the chemical program (VX) was before the Commission was informed and after, in other words the period was longer than the Special Commission was told, but that is a secondary issue. The main issues are in the biological and nuclear fields.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] When will you meet with Ekeus again, and what will you tell him, if Iraq has already supplied all the information as you say?

[Rashid] We expect Ekeus to come to Iraq on the 27th of this month. A meeting is always useful. It is a joint effort because without Iraq's cooperation the work of the Special Commission would achieve nothing. We have supplied all the information. On 11 May, I handed over a copy of a complete new file on the biological program and a special file on the chemical program. On the 15th of this month we handed over a file on the missiles, and we are in the process of preparing a file on the nuclear program. We expect that when he comes, Ekeus will make an assessment and "explain" if he has any additional observations and whether he has any additional unfulfilled details and what additional things he wants. There is also an additional request from the Special Commission. It wants a way of verifying that information. We have discussed ways of verifying information, that is the verification process [last two words in English]. The meeting will be useful in the light of the information we provided over the past three months, and it will enable the Special Commission to make an assessment and Ekeus to submit his half-yearly report on 15 December. We hope that, in the light of our meeting with him, Ekeus' report will be positive and reflect Iraq's openness and dealing with absolute openness, and will show that Iraq proposed ways of verification but some time might be needed to verify the information, and also that Iraq has cooperated on this matter.

Verification can be done in various ways such as meetings with specialists, thorough scrutiny of details, and visits to the sites to see what activities and work go on there, as well as the examination and verification of available documents. Sometimes the Special Commission goes to extremes not required by the Security Council and that regrettably causes some delay, perhaps under U.S. pressure on the Special Commission to make it go to extremes in its request for details, thus hampering its work. Iraq's commitment is now clear. The question is when the Special Commission will acknowledge that. At any rate, we have given clear instructions to all the specialists: Provide all the requested details regardless of whether they are important or not.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] Is that full cooperation you speak of a new line after the exit of Husayn Kamil?

[Rashid] Since the end of 1991 and the beginning of 1992 the instructions I have been receiving from the Iraqi leadership — and I am the official in charge of that file since then — is full cooperation, fulfillment of the required openness, and commitment to the resolutions. Husayn Kamil used to obstruct the cooperation and to find excuses for not cooperating. For the record, I say that he tried to torpedo relations between Iraq and the Special Commission. For instance, what was required was information not endeavors but he used to say do not give them information, about matters that were not concealed and were supplied before his defection. They (the Commission) used to request destruction of some equipment or (call for) a strict control system. We were in no position to obstruct that and we were fully positive in addressing that, but Husayn Kamil used to find various justifications for exaggeration and extremism. That hurdle has now been removed. Our freedom of movement and freedom to implement the leadership's instructions is now complete.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] We have heard that Iraq sent its finance minister to some Arab states to claim the funds which Husayn Kamil took out....

[Rashid] No, the finance minister did not go for that purpose. One week before leaving Iraq, Husayn Kamil claimed that there would be a problem with the United States and that there would be renewed military aggression. Under that pretext he withdrew the hard currency deposits from various sources and put them at his own personal disposal on the pretext that aggression might occur. That way he collected $8.71 million, which he placed in his own official department, in his own room. When he fled he took that with him. We have the serial numbers of these banknotes, and we have compiled a complete file which we handed over to Interpol according to international law and we asked Interpol to interrogate him. That matter is documented with figures. These were official funds he withdrew on the pretext that they would be at the disposal of the Iraqi leadership. Add to that the fact that he had suspect financial links with a relative of his called 'Izz-al-Din, who fled with him. 'Izz-al-Din had suspect links with four merchants who dealt with the industrial sector and who were given some facilities by Husayn Kamil, particularly in the sale at exorbitant profits in the black market of cigarettes given to them, with Husayn Kamil getting paid directly. The exact amount of these sums is not known but they go into millions of dollars.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] You have visited Jordan. Is there close cooperation between Jordan and Iraq in the oil sector?

[Rashid] There is good cooperation and coordination with Jordan. There is the project of building a pipeline extending from Iraq's interior to Jordan's interior because [road] tankers are facing major cost and road (problems). It is preferable to transport oil through pipelines. Iraqi-Jordanian relations are strategic. We have made the necessary studies for the pipeline and submitted them to the Jordanian side, which will make its observations, after which the project will be open to international bids. We will need funding for that project, which will be submitted to some companies for that purpose. The project's capacity will be 350,000 barrels a day and it will later reach its maximum capacity. The brothers in Jordan wish to build a refinery in al-'Aqabah with a capacity of 850,000 barrels a day, for refining crude oil. Experienced as it is, Iraq has made a technical study and submitted it to the Jordanians. Furthermore, a Jordanian-Iraqi committee is now in the final process of formation with a joint board of directors for joint work on the pipeline or the development of oilfields. We have oil exploration and development fields and the Jordanians are contributing to that work. We have welcomed that. There are possibilities for developing the Ghazi field in Jordan and we will work on it. Relations between us are deep-rooted. There is no crisis between us (but) the U.S. Administration is trying to fabricate a problem when actually there is no problem.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] Your talks with the foreign oil companies have made considerable progress. The French companies Total and Elf are known to want to develop the Nahr 'Umar and Majnun fields in Iraq. Why is the Iraqi side delaying the signing of the agreement when the two companies want to sign an initial agreement before the international embargo on Iraq is lifted?

[Rashid] What the media said was that there was hesitation on the French side and delay on the Iraqi side, but we are constantly in contact to bring the technical aspect to fruition. The contractual aspect is in its final stages. We have accomplished a lot and a little bit remains. The matter is at a very advanced stage. We are talking about very large fields requiring major investments with production figures reaching half a million barrels a day which is equivalent to the production of some states. Many states do not have the production capacity of even one of these two fields. Relations with France are good, otherwise we would not have these oil links. We hope that these oil links will boost the distinguished French political position which would lead to the signing of the contracts. We are also at a very advanced stage with the Russian companies. All the contracts are in the final stages.

[Taqiyy-al-Din] How much will the new contracts currently being negotiated with the Russian and French companies add to Iraq's production capacity?

[Rashid] A few million barrels a day over and above Iraq's current production capacity of 2.5 million barrels a day, but at present we are producing 700,000 barrels a day because there are no exports. That production is for local consumption with 70,000 barrels export to Jordan. But as soon as the embargo is lifted we will import some operation and reserve equipment and our capacity will be restored to 3.5 million a day without any new projects such as the ones we have been talking about with the French and the Russians. Our aim is to reach a production capacity of 6 million barrels a day within 10 years from now.

Blames Husayn Kamil for Problems With UN

AU2211155595 Vienna DER STANDARD in German 22 Nov 95 p 3

[Interview with Oil Minister 'Amir Rashid by Gudrun Harrer in Vienna; date not given: "Everything is Exaggerated — As Usual"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Harrer] Today you have the post of Husayn Kamil, who defected in August, and you are therefore responsible for cooperation with the United Nations, which controls Iraqi disarmament — the fulfillment of the UN resolutions after the Gulf war. Special commissioner Ralph Ekeus said last week that Iraqi officers had suggested that there might be Iraqi actions if the relations between the United Nations and Iraq were to further deteriorate.

[Rashid] From experience, we do not comment on anything that was perhaps quoted out of context. At any rate, such a statement is absolutely unfounded. Our cooperation with the United Nations is good and completely open. There are simply no reasons for a possible showdown.

[Harrer] But the threat would — like the previous one in June — rather be meant in case the United Nations does not adequately reward Iraq's readiness to cooperate by lifting the sanctions.

[Rashid] If we fulfill our obligations and the UN Commission also adheres to its mandate, there should be no reason for a confrontation.

General Husayn Kamil removed the main obstacle to full cooperation with the United Nations by his escape in August. Because of his special instructions — which completely contradicted the instructions of our leadership — some information was held back.

[Harrer] Some?

[Rashid] Yes, this is exaggerated, as usual. Let us take the biological program. Basically, there is only one point that is new and relevant. During the Iraq-Iran war, many things were considered, but hardly anything implemented. A new thing after Husayn Kamil's escape was the nuclear "crash program," of which the United Nations also says, however, that it would not have led to anything.

[Harrer] You have said that Iraq presented a draft of a "final and complete report." It is not the first one. This is embarrassing for those who believed the former — false — reports.

[Rashid] However, the stage is basically the same as in former reports, for example, regarding missiles.

[Harrer] The United Nations in Baghdad told me that it is completely new that Iraq was capable of an independent missile production.

[Rashid] There is news, but it is without significance. This is also recognized for practical reasons — but always exaggerated in the media for political reasons. The same applies to the news in the field of chemical weapons.

[Harrer] The production of highly poisonous VX gas.

[Rashid] No, the production was known, but not its start.

[Harrer] No VX is missing?

[Rashid] We showed the special commission where it had been destroyed and invited it to examine it.

We instructed our people: Whatever information you have, no matter how unimportant it may seem to you, pass it on, so that nothing can be politically used to our disadvantage in any way.

[Harrer] You said that whenever the cooperation with the United Nations is progressing well, someone comes — one of the enemies of Iraq — and tries to disturb this cooperation. Here I am thinking of Ekeus' remarks: Are there not also people in Baghdad who are interested in maintaining the embargo?

[Rashid] Why should they?

[Harrer] Because they earn lots of money.

[Rashid] But that is the good thing about Husayn Kamil's escape. We have got rid of this disease.

[Harrer] You were his closest colleague. What did you know of his machinations?

[Rashid] I have been and I am responsible for the negotiations with the UN commission and the management of the military industry. Well, I had two problems: Ekeus on the one hand and Husayn Kamil on the other. I had no problems with my government, I had clear instructions to cooperate. However, Husayn Kamil constantly interfered, in order to undermine the relations with the leadership. He always found ways and means. He would have put up with the death of millions of people simply for the sake of power.

He was a criminal nature. He would have finished anyone who opposed him. I, for example, always tried to keep him in a good mood. He would have simply eliminated me if it had suited him.

As far as his corruptness is concerned, it was much discussed in the street. Everyone knew it, but, on the other hand, one was not sure whether it was not after all only antigovernmental propaganda, also the rumors that he had profited from cigarette deals. Now we know that this was $120,000 per day.

On the day of his departure $8.7 million went missing. Two weeks before his escape, he summoned two persons and said: "The nation is in danger. There will be a military confrontation and we have to take our hard currency to a safe place. This is a presidential order." They were proud of the confidence. He also threatened them with severe punishment if they betrayed anything. Of course, we also wonder about his connections and whether he really made off only because he felt the rope around his neck.

[Harrer] What "connections"?

[Rashid] With the CIA, which possibly coordinated everything with him.

[Harrer] You are saying that Husayn Kamil was the whole problem, but lately Saddam Husayn has also called again for the struggle against corruption. In his own family...

[Rashid] Yes, their behavior, their financial dealings.

[Harrer] But that means that there are problems in this respect.

[Rashid] No, no, it is simply a priority now. If you declare, for example, agriculture a priority, this does not immediately mean that there are problems with agriculture.

Foreign Ministry Official Criticizes Ekeus Statements

JN2211155195 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1440 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 22 Nov (INA)—Dr. Riyad al- Qaysi, Iraqi Foreign Ministry under secretary, said Wednesday [22 November] that Iraq has offered all the information it has as regards Section C of Resolution 687 and it continues to cooperate with the Special Commission and its envoys.

Reacting to statements attributed to Rolf Ekeus, in which he claimed that Iraq still has information on weapons which it refuses to reveal, Dr. Riyad al-Qaysi told INA that these statements and others are not within Ekeus' mandate since he is a UN employee and should be impartial and objective.

He added: If the statements attributed to him were correct, then Rolf Ekeus is not objective. Iraq did not refuse to reveal information as Mr. Ekeus claims, because it offered all the pertinent information it has and continues to cooperate with the Special Commission and its envoys and is answering all their questions, clearly and objectively.

Al-Qaysi said: The statements attributed to Ekeus are really strange, especially since they were made before his next visit to Baghdad scheduled for 27 November. The visit is supposed to achieve some positive progress to complete the requirements of Section C of Resolution 687.

He added: Ekeus is now touring the Gulf states to secure funds for the Special Commission, which exhausted all its resources. It seems that Ekeus' statements aim at exaggerating matters to create a negative climate that would push certain well-known quarters to finance the Special Commission.

Paper on Relationship With UN Special Commission

JN2411132695 Baghdad INA in English
1230 GMT 24 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Nov 24, INA — An Iraqi daily said Iraq's hard experience in dealing with the U.N. Special Commission has shown that there is a political trend, led by America and participated by international and regional parties, aims at delaying the work of the commission or influencing upon its decisions.

In an article on Friday, AL-THAWRAH, organ of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party, said this political trend steps up pressures whenever there was an imminent solution for the outstanding problems. The U.S.-led trend is trying to distort facts about the forthcoming discussions between Iraq and the ad hoc commission in order to delay its work and the start of the lifting of embargo, the paper added.

These political attempts and pressures have become well-known by the world at large, said the paper, adding that Iraq is demanding that the Special Commission and its chairman should be away from any sort of influence or pressure especially that the commission is of an independent international aim.

Iraq, which stressed many times its desire to seriously and faithfully cooperate with the ad hoc commission to make progress in what concerns Section C of Resolution 687, hopes that its desire to be reciprocated by the commission through being of objective and honest desire during its next discussions, the paper explained.

King Husayn Said Seeking To Base Iraqi Opposition in Amman

LD2311201695 Riyadh SPA in Arabic
1832 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Nov — In a statement published today, Thursday, in the Cairo newspaper AL-AHRAM, Layth Qubbah, an Iraqi Muslim opposition figure [member of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq], said that King Husayn of Jordan is trying to establish a unified Iraqi opposition to be based in the Jordanian capital with a view to setting up a government in exile to overthrow Saddam Husayn's regime. He said that the Iraqi opposition is now trying to move its center of activity from northern Iraq to Amman.

For his part, Muhammad al-Zahir, leader of the Union of Iraqi Democrats in London, told the newspaper that: "King Husayn and an envoy of his have contacted the Islamic opposition, who have encouraged him to lead a campaign to overthrow Saddam Husayn."

According to AL-AHRAM, al-Zahir said that there is implicit U.S. and British approval for the Jordanian role in Iraq.

Egypt Said Trying To Cancel Ban on Internal Flights

JN2311205595 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1825 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a dispatch from its correspondent in Cairo, the Jordanian newspaper AL-RA'Y has said that the Egyptian Foreign Ministry's first under secretary has asserted that lifting or easing the embargo imposed on Iraq has nothing to do with achieving Arab reconciliation.

He added: This reconciliation will not be achieved overnight and will take time, so certain measures are required. This does not mean that until such measures are taken, the Iraqi people should continue to face this embargo and suffering.

The Egyptian official said that Egypt demands finding a way to break this circle of suffering which has been severe and unwarranted.

Egyptian political sources have said that, through its diplomatic contacts, Egypt currently seeks to cancel the decision on banning internal flights in Iraq. This decision was made by the United States and Britain in 1992.

The sources added that the Egyptian foreign minister recently received a message from Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister on this issue. They said that the Egyptian trade delegation, which visited Iraq two weeks ago, signed an agreement to reopen the Egyptian Trade Center in Baghdad in order to activate Egyptian exports to Iraq.

Saddam Chairs RCC, Ba'th Party Meeting

JN2211203995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2000 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 22 Nov (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has chaired a joint meeting for the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party.

At the outset of the meeting, the president and the conferees read the first chapter of the Koran for the soul of late comrade Sa'di Mahdi Salih, member of the Iraq Command and National Assembly speaker. The president spoke about the good qualities of the deceased, God's mercy be upon him.

The conferees then discussed the final draft of the local People's Councils law. The conferees endorsed the draft and decided to refer it to the National Assembly for discussion and approval.

The meeting was attended by the finance minister.

Saddam Attends Air Force Symposium, Makes Remarks

JN2211212095 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 2010 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] Staff Field Marshal President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, has participated in the meetings of the joint scientific military symposium of the commands of the Air Force and Air Defense, which was held on 20-22 November 1995 under his excellency's patronage, under the slogan "We win the battle when we prepare its correct requirements."

On his arrival at the meeting hall, he was received by Staff General 'Abd-al-Jabbar Shanshal, minister of state for military affairs; Defense Minister Staff General Sultan Hashim Ahmad, and members of the Armed Forces General Command.

At the outset of the symposium, Koranic verses were recited, and then the audience stood to read the first chapter of the Koran for the souls of our martyrs. The lieutenant general, director of the symposium, gave a briefing on the symposium and its topics, and requested his excellency's permission to begin the symposium, which took place with God's blessing.

Discussions focused on the researches presented by the fighters, during which his excellency made valuable remarks regarding the combat activities our beloved country witnessed during the imperialist 30-state aggression against our mujahid country. His excellency stressed the importance of accuracy in verifying data, especially since they constitute important historical documents for the coming generations, as well as the need to explain the enemy actions and its various effects in an objective manner.

His excellency stressed the importance of giving the heroic men who have contributed to deterring, resisting, and repulsing evil, what they deserve in terms of study and research, for this is a true heritage that allows future generations to learn about the heroic stands and great deeds of the present generations through the legitimate acknowledgment of the Iraqi steadfastness based on accurate figures. He said that the enemy should not be given more than it deserves despite the strength of the opposite trench, which represents the depth of 33 states.

Regarding the portrayal of truth as it is, his excellency stressed: When some states write their military history, they forge facts, or perhaps, they come up with scenarios and beautify their military actions. We portray fact as it is and as the world knows it. We are the owners of a great cultural heritage, and our heroic performance during the Mother of Battles was evidence of the greatness and bravery of men.

Opposition Reports Baghdad Blast, Army Defections

MM2311124995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Nov 95 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Opposition Talks of Explosion in Baghdad"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — The Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation, which is owned by the [Unified] Iraqi National Congress (opposition), has said that a building belonging to the ruling Ba'th Party in Iraq was bombed last week; and that two senior Iraqi Army officers have deserted the Army and joined the Kurdish areas not under government control.

According to the corporation's bulletin, of which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has received a copy, an explosion occurred last Thursday [16 November] in a building belonging to the Ba'th Party near al-Mukhtar Hospital in the capital, Baghdad, killing 12 party and security personnel and injuring 20 others. The corporation added that security personnel are trained in the two-story building before being sent into Kurdish areas in northern Iraq to carry out "subversive actions." Independent sources have not confirmed this report.

The corporation said in another bulletin that two Iraqi Army officers — a major general and a brigadier — deserted the Army last week and defected to the areas controlled by Kurdish parties in the north. The corporation did not name the two officers or specify the two posts they held before their defection, or how they managed to reach the areas not under government control.

Leading Communist Urges Formation of Communist Party

JN2211172395

[FBIS Editorial Report] Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic on 7 November publishes on page six a 700-word article by Dr. Yusuf Hamdan, former candidate member of the Iraqi Communist Party Central Committee, on the 78th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The article is preceded by the following note from the chief editor: "As we proceed with firm steps toward political pluralism, which should be based on firm national constants; mainly, that any new party must serve Iraq under the flag of the people's leader, Saddam Husayn, we feel that the publication of this article is a step in the right direction. We hope that we will receive articles from other forces which represent other trends for publication."

In his article, Dr. Hamdan begins by saying that Arab Marxists are celebrating this historic event in their own special way; not by reiterating rigid communist jargon, but by pondering the lessons learned from the course of this revolution and the mistakes which led to the collapse of the regimes in the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc countries.

Dr. Hamdan then refers to the forthcoming legislative elections in Russia, saying the communists will enter these elections under "the program approved by the First Congress of the Russian Communist Party in February 1995." He adds: "Here they are proceeding with firm steps toward Red Square and the Kremlin to restore October's glory. Moscow's autumn flowers have bloomed before their time predicting an early spring of 1996, when even the ballot boxes of the presidential elections would turn into victory garlands to adorn Lenin's tomb, and the monuments of the leader of the Bolsheviks would be erected once again in Moscow's historical squares forever."

Concluding, Dr. Hamdan says: "We Iraqi Marxists, now that our people have carried out a successful mobilization exercise by the referendum of 15 October 1995 and begun the great holy march toward achieving the objectives of building a free homeland and a happy society, must assume our appropriate place in the confrontation trench and reorganize our battalion so that it will take up its position in the great lineup. If we are short of certain technical requirements in the way of equipment and ammunition, it is certain that the leader of the great advance, the leader of the people, is aware of these obstacles when he said: 'We will not replace them, but enable them to perform their duties!!' Therefore, we call upon all those who believe in the principles of the October Revolution and who are capable of using the Marxist-Leninist doctrine in the service of the Iraqi people and the Arab nation on national and pan-Arab bases to respond to the calls for building the Marxist-Leninist party. It is one of the essentials of our progress and one of the means of fulfilling the tasks of achieving national awakening and social progress."

Army Reportedly Clashes With Tribe in al-Najaf

JN2311165695 Amman SAWT AL-MAR'AH in Arabic 22 Nov 95 p 10

["Exclusive" report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad—In a recent meeting chaired by President Saddam Husayn, the Iraqi cabinet discussed last week's bloody incidents in the district of al-Mishkhab in the al-Najaf Governorate south of Baghdad between the al-Hajjam tribe and government forces.

The incidents erupted after this tribe rejected the extraordinary measures taken by the Iraqi Government with regard to deploying army troops around rice farms in the area which supplies Iraq with half of its rice needs and also after Iraqi officials forced peasants to collect their harvest under army supervision and hand over the entire harvest without keeping any part of it to meet the needs of their families.

The Iraqi Government measures created tension which led to a violent confrontation between the tribesmen and government forces. As a result, the tribe's chieftain and 24 people from both sides were killed and a large number of people were wounded. Hospitals in the al-Najaf Governorate were crowded with wounded people. The Iraqi president dispatched envoys to calm down the volatile situation. He earlier promised to open an investigation into the incident. [passage omitted]

Agricultural Plastic Covers Factory Established

JN2311184395 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Announcer-read report; from the "Evening Newspaper" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The mujahidin of the Military Industrialization Organization [MIO] have proudly announced the establishment of a new factory for agricultural plastic covers. These plastic covers measure three by six meters.

In a cable to leader President Saddam Husayn, the MIO mujahidin stressed their full commitment to continuing the creative sacrifices and discovering new alternatives in order to ease the unjust blockade imposed on the Iraqi people and to effectively contribute to construction and progress in various fields.

Two Public Companies Established Under Decree

JN2211133195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1000 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 22 Nov (INA)—It was announced here today that two Iraqi commercial companies were established according to a presidential decree issued in this regard.

The first company, the Public Company for Imports and Exports, will be in charge of issuing imports and exports licenses to the state departments, the social sector, and other quarters that do not have the authority to issue such licenses. This is in addition to the private sector and individuals. The second company, the Public Company for Iraqi Fairs, will be in charge of organizing international and specialized fairs in Iraq and participation in international fairs abroad.

The Public Company for Imports and Exports was established as part of the Iraqi commercial departments' efforts to organize foreign and domestic trade after the issuance on 10 October 1995 of lists of commodities allowed to be imported and others that need authenticated import licenses.

The company was also established in light of the new customs law which organizes customs fees paid for imports and allowed commodities. The company was also established to give merchants complete freedom in doing their part in activating the Iraqi economy in accordance with the pertinent laws and regulations.

Paper on 'Miserable State' of Baghdad Subways

JN2211175895 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 13 Nov 95 p 5

[Article by Yusra Hamid al-Shujayri: "Painful Scenes in Derelict Pedestrian Subways and Bridges"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Although pedestrian subways and bridges are signs of civilization, we have observed that people here tend to avoid them. Now, is this due to their miserable state, or just lack of awareness on the part of the citizens? To find the answer to this question, read this article.

At the al-Tahrir Square subway near Bab al-Sharqi, someone advised me to put a handkerchief on my nose when passing through these dark subways, especially the one opposite al-Jumhuriyah Bridge, due to the bad smell, let alone the improper graffiti written on its walls.

Inside the subway, a round garden is thronged with shops whose owners clean up their own front patches daily. Cleaning up the subway entrances, however, is the responsibility of the Baghdad Municipality, which charges a monthly fee of 300 dinars for this service which is seldom done, according to one shop owner. The same can be said about other subways, such as the al-Shuhada' Subway near al-Nahr Street, where a shop owner said the cleaning contractor removes the rubbish only once a month and still gets his fee.

There is another subway at the end of al-Shuhada' Bridge, but it is blocked by heaps of garbage, although citizens need it badly to go to the General Pensions Department. Other subways are shut completely, such as the one under al-Dawrah-New Baghdad highway due to road construction work on the street opposite al-Shurtah and al-Khawranq Quarters. 'Abd-al-Amir Shihab, who lives in the area, said that several incidents took place on that street due to the closure of the pedestrian subway, which compels people to cross at their own risk. A man and a child were killed in an accident only two months ago, he said.

Subways are not the only problem. Pedestrian bridges also show signs of dereliction and vandalism. Bab al-Mu'azzm Bridge is one such example. Its metal fences and tiles have been ripped off and the bridge itself is littered with heaps of garbage — a disgusting sight for pedestrians using that bridge on their way to and from work.

The brick walls of another pedestrian bridge opposite al-Karkh Amusement Park are broken down. Children use this bridge daily on their way to and from school or the amusement park. The same can be said about numerous other crossing bridges in Baghdad. The main reason for the vandalism is that the subways are derelict and in a miserable state. They are also unlit, teeming with peddlers, and flooded in winter. In short, they are not properly cleaned and maintained.

Commenting on this state of affairs, Muzaffar 'Abd-al-Sahib, director general of the Planning Department in Baghdad Municipality, says: The Projects Department is responsible for the maintenance of these subways and bridges if the municipal department in which they are located cannot do the job. The maintenance of al-Tahrir Square subway in particular, he said, is the responsibility of the municipality department in which it is located, while maintenance of the interior garden is the responsibility of the Parks Projects Section.

AL-JUMHURIYAH took up this issue with Baghdad Mayor Engineer Tahir Muhammad al-Hassun during the news conference he held on 2 October 1995. At this conference, the mayor cited other dereliction cases which were being reported and criticized.

At any rate, the answer came quickly the following day. The necessary measure was taken, but without actual action being taken. It was said that the cause of all that is the expansion in the geographical area of the City of Baghdad and the increase in its population, which has resulted in a greater demand for municipality services. The ramification of these services has made things difficult for the city's municipality under the old administrative structure and centralized system. However, a new law was issued dividing Baghdad into nine municipal areas, which conform to the geographical areas specified under the new numerical system for the City of Baghdad. Under this law, each municipal area is considered a single geographical entity with enough capabilities to ensure and develop all services in the best manner possible.

Finally, we hope that the new law will contain a general remedy for all the ills and pitiful state suffered by the pedestrian subways and bridges.

Peres on Syria Track, Reassures Palestinians

TA2211185595 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Interview with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by Eli Nisan at the Knesset after the vote of confidence on 22 November — recorded, in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; translated from the Hebrew]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Nisan] Mr. Peres, in your Knesset address today, you expressed optimism regarding the possibility of reaching an agreement with Syria. Are you indeed optimistic about our reaching an agreement with Syria in the coming year?

[Peres] I was not dealing in guesswork. I said that we are willing to negotiate with Syria, and I hope there will be progress. I was not guessing.

[Nisan] Are contacts under way toward the possibility of making progress with Syria?

[Peres] Yes. The Americans are examining the issue, but we have yet to hear the news they are bringing from there.

[Nisan] The Palestinians are worried about the implementation of the agreement. Can you allay their fears?

[Peres] Reality has allayed their fears. They are always concerned, but look at what is really happening. We are keeping all our promises, and we are even doing this ahead of schedule.

[Nisan] Will the fact that Rabbi 'Amital joined the cabinet help expand the basis of the coalition?

[Peres] Spiritually, certainly.

[Nisan] And on the party level?

[Peres] We were not dealing in partisan calculations; we made a spiritual calculation.

[Nisan] Are you optimistic on this issue?

[Peres] Yes.

Peres To Show Clinton Document on Golan Withdrawal

TA2211192295 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Studio talk between anchor Oshrat Kotler and political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Kotler] Prime Minister Peres will meet with President Bill Clinton on 11 December. What will he bring to the President on the Syrian issue?

[Rosen] Peres will present him with a written and detailed document that will, in fact, expand on the phrase coined by Rabin: The depth of withdrawal equals the depth of peace. Shim'on Peres will say: In return for full peace with Syria, we are willing to withdraw to the international border. Because he cannot say this in such explicit and clear terms at this stage, he will use conditional language: If Syria gives us A, B, and C, we will be willing to pay this high price.

[Kotler] In his conversation with Clinton, Peres will certainly raise the issue of pardoning Jonathan Pollard. What are the chances of this happening?

[Rosen] Yes, Peres will present President Clinton with a letter written by the late Yitzhaq Rabin, which he did not have the opportunity to bring himself, asking to free Jonathan Pollard. It is no accident that yesterday, 21 November, the Israeli Government — in fact, Minister Baraq — decided to grant Pollard Israeli citizenship.

For quite a long time, there has been a secret Israeli-U.S. agreement that starting 21 November, 10 years after Pollard was arrested, his status would change and the countdown toward his release would start. This is why the symbolic move of granting him citizenship was made yesterday.

To Stress Need for Public al-Asad Appeal

TA2311125595 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Nov 95 p A4

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar in Washington]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In his upcoming meeting with President Clinton, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will stress the importance he attaches to an appeal by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to the Israeli public; however, a senior Israeli source said yesterday that Peres will ask the U.S. Administration to make it clear to the Syrians that he is not prepared to pay for such a move through substantial concessions.

An Israeli source in Washington said yesterday that the Peres-al- Asad meeting is the best way "to get the negotiations moving on the right track." Prior to his meeting with Peres on 11 December, President Clinton is due to speak with al-Asad with the aim of creating the conditions for an announcement on the resumption of talks with Syria in a joint news conference with Peres. In a briefing to Israeli correspondents, an Israeli source in Washington said yesterday that the administration's achievement in the Balkans will increase its appetite and its ability to deal with foreign issues but that it is still unclear whether that will apply to the Middle East.

The source did not rule out the possibility that opponents of the plan to deploy U.S. soldiers on the Golan Heights will try to drag Congress into a dispute over the issue in the wake of the differences over the deployment of a U.S. force in Bosnia. He said that there is no comparison between the dispatch of a limited number of "inspectors" to the Golan and the 20,000 soldiers President Clinton wants to send to the Balkans as a peace force.

The source noted that opponents of the government's peace policy have been notably more cautious in recent weeks and expressed the hope that this will continue. He said Israel will not insist on Washington's continuing to serve as the venue for the talks with Syria and might even prefer to hold direct negotiations with Syria in the region.

He said the Syrians are interested in rapprochement with the Americans and therefore prefer to hold the talks in Washington. He referred to the importance of the meeting between Eytan Bentzur, Foreign Ministry deputy director general, and his Syrian counterpart but claimed that there has been no change in the contents of the negotiations. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Baraq on Scope of Powers, Syria

TA2211195995 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Interview with Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq by Hayim Yavin in the studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Yavin] Even before Ehud Baraq was plunged into the Foreign Ministry, Shim'on Peres announced that he was delegating some of his powers to Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir. Good evening, Minister Baraq. Our congratulations!

[Baraq] Thank you.

[Yavin] You seem to be entering the Foreign Ministry with reduced powers.

[Baraq] I do not think anything has been reduced, and I do not think the powers of such a ministry can be reduced at all. As soon as Shim'on Peres informed me that I would be appointed foreign minister, I asked Uri Savir to remain as the ministry's director general. In any event, Uri had been appointed by the late Prime Minister Rabin to supervise the work of the team that negotiated with the Palestinians.

[Yavin] Will you have no problem with this axis made up of Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, who held the reins of the negotiations when he was foreign minister; Yosi Beilin, minister in the Prime Minister's Office; and Uri Savir? What is left for you: ambassadorial appointments?

[Baraq] What is left for me is what every previous Israeli foreign minister, from Moshe Sharet to Shim'on Peres, has had. In Israel, it is only natural for prime ministers to be deeply involved in the policies of the political processes. This applied to Ben- Gurion and Menahem Begin, it applied to Yitzhaq Rabin, and it is only right that the same should apply to Shim'on Peres. I have no problem with it. There is a very simple division between what the ministerial ranks and the operative levels do.

[Yavin] You see yourself as a full partner in the political endeavor. Do you have any new ideas regarding Syria, for instance? The prime minister made a very dramatic appeal to President al-Asad today.

[Baraq] I will undoubtedly be a full partner in this political endeavor. I am convinced that peace with Syria is a supreme strategic interest both for the State of Israel and for Syria. In my opinion, the fact that the prime minister used the plural form of address was no accident. He said: Let us make a contribution to comprehensive peace, and he meant: Both you and we will make a contribution at the same time. In my opinion, we should wait and see how the Syrians respond to that, what they have to say. I am positive that they will find us to be a partner that is attentive to the opportunities for peace and very sensitive on the issue of security.

[Yavin] Do you have any new ideas about how the talks with Syria should start? I believe the Syrians do not have very favorable recollections of you, after your encounter with the Syrian chief of staff.

[Baraq] They remember me as one who represents the Israeli defense establishment's stand, and it is just as well that they know what that stand is. I think quite a lot of creative thinking about the Syrian issue will be required, because we will have to thoroughly examine the chance for peace. I do not think, however, that it should be discussed over....

[Yavin, interrupting] I understand, but still, can you give us a hint of the trend? How do you think the process with the Syrians should be launched?

[Baraq] I think it would be best if a way could be found to conduct a thorough discussion of what real peace — not the slogan but peace itself — involves; what security arrangements and early warning mean; what the practical implication of time schedules is. I think we will know in the coming weeks whether the Syrians are willing to discuss these matters, and I believe that will be the right way to launch the talks.

[Yavin] Is the resumption of the Washington talks on the agenda?

[Baraq] The question of venues is a technicality, and while some venues are better than others, it depends on the Syrians more than us right now.

[Yavin] Minister Baraq, we wish you success in your position. Thank you for coming to our studio.

Baraq on Vision of Settlement, Rejects 1967 Border

TA2311172095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In his first public appearance as foreign minister, Ehud Baraq told Labor Party members from the moshavim movement today that Israel will maintain a large and united Jerusalem, preserve a security and settlement hold in the Jordan Valley, and maintain the 'Etzyon Bloc and a settlement bloc in western Samaria. Our correspondent Gil Litman reports from Rishpon:

[Begin recording] [Litman] The foreign minister was warmly received by the Labor moshavim members. He was greeted by applause, and at least two of the speakers said they hope the post of Israeli prime minister is in his future. Ehud Baraq devoted half of his speech to partisan affairs and the other half to political issues. First he told the crowd that they should see to it that the country's youth vote for Labor in the coming elections. His political comments were aimed at Israeli ears but even more so at Palestinian and Syrian ears:

[Baraq] We are now considering the possibility of making compromises with the Palestinians and the Syrians; however, we will not do this in a manner that will harm Israel's fundamental security.

[Litman] Baraq drew an interesting borderline, perhaps dropping a hint about how he views the map of the final arrangement with the Palestinians. Somebody in the crowd remarked that Baraq's border is more like Rabin's than Rabin's itself.

[Baraq] We believe that both the right thing and the smart thing to do in the long run is to separate from the Palestinians; remain in a large and united Jerusalem under our sovereignty [applause]; preserve a security and settlement hold in the Jordan Valley; maintain the 'Etzyon Bloc and a bloc of settlements in western Samaria; preserve a wide corridor and introduce border changes; and not return to the 1967 border. To those who ask how we will make these decisions, my answer is: We will decide because we are stronger. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Rabinovich Rejects Claims of Demotion in Syria Role

TA2311073295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israel's ambassador to Washington Itamar Rabinovich says he does not feel that he has been dropped from the negotiating team with Syria. The ambassador rejects the view that the appointment of Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir as coordinator of the peace talks means that he has been demoted. Rabinovich says that if the negotiations with Syria continue at the ambassadorial level, he will lead Israel's team. If the framework is changed, then Prime Minister Peres will determine who will be in control of the delegation.

Netanyahu Addresses Knesset, Faults Accords

TA2211145595 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 3 Network in Hebrew 0940 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Address by Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu to the Knesset on the occasion of the presentation of the new cabinet — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Speaker, Honorable Knesset Members: This session, which is convening to approve the new government, is being held under extraordinary circumstances. We still find ourselves within the month of mourning for the late Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, may he rest in peace. In my speech at the special Knesset mourning session, I noted that it is precisely under these tragic circumstances that it is incumbent upon all of us to act to strengthen the internal unity of the Israeli people which undoubtedly serves as the basis for our strength and power. It is our responsibility to strengthen Israeli democracy, which is the basic tool for maintaining the nation's unity and clearly defining the disagreements among its different sectors. It is in this spirit that the Likud has decided to abstain in the vote of confidence in the new government. By this decision, we are expressing our position that a political murder must not disrupt the continuity of regime in a democratic country. In a democratic country, the regime is replaced through proper democratic processes — primarily, the process of general elections. Therefore, we do not want to prevent the establishment of the Labor government that is slated to follow the government of the late Yitzhaq Rabin. Our vote today is a vote of confidence in Israeli democracy.

Regrettably, however, we have no confidence in the path of the new government, just as we had no confidence in its predecessor's path. Let me repeat: There is no question here of lovers versus enemies of peace. The argument between us is over the way to achieve the peace we all desire. We believe that only when two minimal conditions are met can there be true peace between us and our neighbors. The first condition is that the Arab side be sincere in its intentions toward peace, and the second is that there be appropriate security and deterrent measures in case these intentions change, those who stand behind them are replaced, or the intentions should be proven false. We, a Likud government, led the historic peace agreement with Egypt when it was absolutely clear to us that both these conditions were fulfilled. There was no doubt regarding the sincerity of the late President al-Sadat's intentions. He stood here, on the Knesset podium where I now stand, as well as on the podium in the Egyptian Parliament, where he reiterated his slogan "No more war." [last three words in English] He also appeared before militant Muslim clergies and announced that there is no more jihad. Nonetheless, we said that even if the first condition regarding the sincerity of the Arab side's peace intentions was met, leaders could be murdered, as al-Sadat regrettably was, and we asked: Who can guarantee that an Islamic revolution will not take place in any Arab country, including Egypt, God forbid? What good would a peace treaty be then, despite all its good, written, and signed intentions? It would be worthless. That is why we insisted on the second condition — the security arrangements, of course — in the peace treaty with Egypt, which took the form of a large and demilitarized 200-km piece of land in the Sinai Desert which provides us with full security against the possibilities of a change in intentions or faults in the peace agreement. In other words, both conditions were met in the peace treaty with Egypt.

We considered these two very conditions when we examined the peace arrangement with Jordan and, when we realized they were met, we supported it as well. First, Jordanian King Husayn's sincerity: For over 25 years, he has proven to us through security, intelligence, and economic cooperation — and primarily when he removed the headquarters of the PLO and other terrorists from Jordan in 1970 — that he truly seeks peace. Nonetheless, in this case, too, we said: Peace intentions are not enough. After all, 20 years after the removal of the terrorist headquarters, after 20 years of de facto peace, we realized that when King Husayn was under pressure before the Gulf war, when Saddam Husayn was garnering strength, he, too, shifted in the direction of the coalition of war against us. No one wants peace with us more sincerely than King Husayn. Yet here, too, we had to and still must make sure that the proper security arrangements are in place in case something goes wrong in Jordan. This treaty met the second condition as well: appropriate security arrangements. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is deployed along the Jordan River and, even more important to me, is situated on the mountain tops overlooking the Jordan Rift Valley, providing us with the necessary security guarantee for preserving the peace and, obviously, for deterring a war or repelling an assault if one is launched against us.

While the two minimal conditions necessary for the existence of peace are met in the peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan — which is why we signed one and supported the other — I am sorry to say that not one of them is met in the case of the agreement with the PLO. First, with regard to the sincerity of Yasir 'Arafat's peace intentions, I believe no one gives better testimony to 'Arafat's sincere desire for peace than 'Arafat himself: He systematically avoids canceling the Palestinian Covenant. In an address at Harvard University, he avoided even this minimal move. Unlike al-Sadat and Husayn, he does not stop preaching jihad, mainly when addressing his own people.

My associate, Knesset Member Beni Begin, cited the recent gem from 11 November. Pay attention, Knesset Members, this is one week after the assassination of Yitzhaq Rabin. Speaking on the Palestinian radio from Gaza to Gaza, 'Arafat said: The struggle will continue until all of Palestine is liberated. He continues to praise the suicide martyrs. He encourages young men and women use their self-sacrifice as an example. He constantly speaks of Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian state which, obviously, will be established on all of the territory of Palestine. In all honesty, he has not made the psychological shift we saw in the case of al-Sadat and in King Husayn's recent address to his parliament, in which he said: Jihad has ended. The boycott has ended. This is an era of peace. The first condition for upholding true peace in the Middle East — as it is today, ladies and gentlemen, not as we imagine it to be — must be this, and it is not fulfilled in the case of the PLO and 'Arafat.

As for the second condition, that of security arrangements: In the Oslo accords we placed our security in the hands of the legions of the PLO. We said that the IDF will not be the force that will strike at the terrorists who come from inside the areas handed over to 'Arafat but rather squads commanded by terrorists who have shed the blood of Israelis. The result of this arrangement — this insecurity arrangement — is no security. The result is the foundation of cities of refuge for terrorists that will soon be entire regions of refuge and soon afterward a state of refuge for terrorists along the 1967 lines. Between the implementation of the Oslo A and Oslo B accords, we said that no progress should be made unless the conditions set out in the Oslo A accord are met: the cancellation of the covenant and evidence that they are meeting the security conditions. I must say with regret that these conditions were not met, and yet the government went on to Oslo B. God knows what will happen in Oslo C and Oslo D.

The alternative we are offering regarding the policy of peace vis-a-vis the Palestinians is based on our insistence on these two conditions. We must demand that our Palestinian partners prove in word and deed that their peace intentions are sincere. They must do so not only by canceling clauses that call for our destruction but also and primarily in the way the Palestinian leaders address their public. They must stop their terrible incitement against us, stop the propaganda that calls for our annihilation, and change their education. This is the minimum an honest government must demand if it seeks to attain true peace.

The second condition is security. According to our concept, security must remain in the hands of the IDF. The IDF must be able to operate anywhere west of the Jordan River. There will be no places of refuge; there will be no safe havens. The real difference in concept between us and you is expressed in the concept of autonomy. Anyone can use the term autonomy. The basic difference between autonomy and a sovereign state is who has responsibility for security. Spain's Basque region has autonomy and terrorism emanates from that region, but it is not the Basque army that is responsible for security. Security lies in the hands of the federal Spanish Army, which can intervene everywhere, go in everywhere, and act everywhere and at any time. Here, a state is being set up. You are setting up a Palestinian state throughout the territories — a state with its own government, its own president, its own parliament, and, Knesset Members, its own army.

If I must summarize the difference between your outlook and ours, it is that we want an autonomy and not a state, while you, in practice, are setting up a state and not an autonomy — an armed state along the 1967 boundaries. Therefore, in the present debate, we cannot blur the differences; in fact, I would say it is important that we make it very clear: The public will have to decide in the next elections — and only in elections — between two concepts, your peace path, which is leading us to the 1967 boundaries and the establishment of an armed Palestinian state, and our path of administrative autonomy, with security remaining in the hands of the IDF.

Members of the Knesset, on the Syrian issue, we depart precisely on the same points. We first ask the most basic question: Do the Syrian Government and Hafiz al-Asad have peace intentions? I must tell you that I am convinced that al-Asad wants peace with the United States, but I am not at all sure — and that is an understatement — that he wants peace with Israel, because whoever uses murderous Hizballah terrorism against us in south Lebanon and whoever continues to use the Palestinian terrorist organizations in Damascus is not exactly showing signs of a genuine desire for peace. For the sake of the debate, however, I am prepared to make a quantum leap and say: Let us say that al-Asad proves to us, through a written or spoken promise, that he meets the first condition, should we give up the second condition, which is the security we need to guarantee the peace? I say definitely not. Peace is conditional on adequate security arrangements, which means remaining in our positions on the Golan Heights.

Permit me to quote something with which I totally agree, something which Yitzhaq Rabin said on the eve of the elections: Anybody who gives up the Golan Heights cedes Israel's security, and without security there cannot be peace. He said that even about the peace era. There was no dispute between us and the late Yitzhaq Rabin over that. The dispute began when Mr. Rabin started to give in on the second condition, when he started to give up the Golan Heights. To my regret, he made far-reaching concessions, but I must say that he was apparently unprepared to go all the way, because he did insist on certain minimal security arrangements. That stubbornness led to the talks being frozen, because Syria, which demanded and continues to demand everything, was not prepared to accept those minimal conditions. Several days before his death, Yitzhaq Rabin said no progress would be made in the negotiations with Syria in view of those Syrian positions.

I now hear from the members of the Knesset and the designated ministers — whom I personally and wholeheartedly wish success in each of your fields, and I am sure I also speak for my colleagues — that a special cabinet has been set up to thaw the freeze Yitzhaq Rabin imposed and that Israel is speeding up the negotiating process with Syria. I want to know: What has happened? Has Syria changed its positions? I heard Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' say after the tragic assassination that something good will come out of it. For whom? For Syria. There is no doubt — I think nobody here doubts it — that Syria has not changed its positions one iota. To my regret, all the signs show that this government is continuing to rush ahead to make concessions even Yitzhaq Rabin was not willing to make.

Therefore, we believe that in order to prevent a future war with Syria and for the sake of a stable peace with Syria when the time comes, we must keep the Golan Heights. Not only has that debate not changed, but it apparently will face us all in the coming year.

Mr. Speaker, every man, woman, and child in Israel watching us today expects a leadership that will direct them to a more open state, an Israel living in real peace with its neighbors. The Likud was and continues to be a responsible opposition. We will continue to work in that responsible fashion until we receive the confidence of the people through elections and lead it in a responsible manner to real peace and security.

The most difficult major questions are still awaiting us. In the spirit of conciliation, to which we are all partners, what we can do today is to agree on the manner in which the debate should be conducted. I would like to stress again to this house and to the entire public, whatever its political outlook on the path to peace, that peace starts at home. Without promoting the sense of a common destiny as a single nation that has found its safe harbor after 2,000 years of wandering; without heightening the awareness that unnecessary hatred, political violence, and superfluous factionalism led to the destruction of our state some 2,000 years ago; without those things, not only will we fail to achieve peace with our enemies but we will also endanger our sovereign existence in the Land of Israel. Without a sense of partnership and readiness to debate in a spirit of respect and mutual tolerance, this nation will not be able to continue to exist. I say this especially with regard to the harsh attacks leveled at the national camp and, particularly, the religious public and its spiritual leaders by certain sectors of Israeli politics.

I think we must all desist from such actions. On that, I would like to say something personal. As will be recalled by all members of the house, I myself and my colleagues in the Likud were attacked over an abominable slogan waved at the Zion Square rally. We said repeatedly that there was no way we could have seen the placard from the balcony, and the moment we learned about it from the media, we sharply denounced it, from this podium as well. Nevertheless, the campaign of incitement continued. Now, from the testimony of journalists and eyewitnesses, it is clear that it was an act of provocation by one or two people and that there was no possibility of seeing the picture from the speakers platform. I hope it is clear to those who chose to denigrate and incite that they should not be proud of their actions. I expect all of us to take a different path, to open a new page in the public debate in Israel. It is our supreme duty to stress the points that unite us and not those that divide us in the overall debate between us; to stress the collective and not the divisions; and to search for all the ways and means to ensure that despite the debate, an atmosphere of unity and conciliation prevails not only here in Israel but also in the diaspora, because that is the source of our strength and might.

Mr. Acting Prime Minister, this is not the time to take strident steps which will deepen the divisions in the nation. This is the time to stop and try to heal the rifts, because if we want to achieve peace from without, we must first assure peace from within. We must learn from Hilel and Shamay, two great Hebrew thinkers from the Second Temple period, who held a profound debate on basic questions over a long period of time. They knew how to argue in an atmosphere of love and brotherhood. Each did not give up his truth and each fought for it with great determination, but they did not forget domestic peace and national unity. Their approach should serve as a beacon for us in these difficult times.

Shahal: Rabin Assassination 'Not a Conspiracy'

TA2311111295 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 23 Nov 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal said yesterday that he has changed his view that a conspiracy was behind the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

"I don't think that there was a conspiracy," Shahal told reporters outside the Knesset plenum hall following the vote establishing the new government. "There was a group of persons who organized for two aims: the inner one which included the two ['Amir] brothers, to assassinate the prime minister... and the larger group, those who were planning to harass, probably kill, Palestinians, especially police officers. It was not a conspiracy."

Police Learn of Plans To Murder EYAL's Raviv

TA2211132295 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Nov 95 p A10

[Report by Yosi Hatoni and Re'uven Shapira]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The police have learned that unidentified persons plan to attack or murder EYAL [Irgun Yehudi Lohem] leader Avishay Raviv in the wake of the media reports that Raviv has operated as a Shin Bet agent for the last two years under the code name "Champagne."

As a result, a police guard has been posted around the home of Raviv's parents in Holon, where he is currently staying. Raviv, who knew Rabin's murderer Yig'al Amir, was detained several days after the assassination. He was released from prison on 15 November and put under house arrest. [passage omitted]

Another EYAL Member Detained for 'Illegal Activity'

TA2311112295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court extended for another eight days the remand of Hagay 'Amir and Dror 'Adani. 'Amir is suspected of making and possessing weapons, conspiring to commit a crime, and not preventing a crime. 'Adani was also detained for another eight days. Judge Haya Hefetz said that 'Adani was the third party in the trio planning the assassination. She also said that according to testimony, there is suspicion that he was an active partner in planning the assassination.

'Eran Osalvo, 23, another person suspected of illegal activity in the EYAL [Irgun Yehuda Lohem] movement, was arrested in Jerusalem. The police now intend to request an extension of his remand.

Suspect Names Rabbi Consulted on Assassination Plan

TA2311200795 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Police affairs correspondent Yosi 'En-Dor video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Dror 'Adani, Yig'al 'Amir's friend, has told his interrogators about their plan to assassinate Shim'on Peres as well. 'Adani also said that Yig'al 'Amir sent him to obtain halakic approval for the assassination from Rabbi Moshe Tzuri'el from the Sha'alvim Yeshiva. Rabbi Tzuri'el denies this claim. Our police affairs correspondent Yosi 'En-Dor reports:

[Begin recording] [passage omitted] ['En-Dor] Dror 'Adani, the third link in the planning of Rabin's assassination, was brought to court today for an extension of his remand. It was disclosed today that in answer to his interrogator's question on whether their plan was to hurt both Rabin and Peres, 'Adani said: Let us say that both should be defined as murderers who should be sentenced to death; however, we did not decide who was to go first. It is possible that after seeing that Rabin was easy to get, we might have gone for Peres as well.

Referring to another issue, 'Adani said that according to Hagay 'Amir, Rabin was forsaking the country, while Yig'al 'Amir said that Rabin was a rodef [someone who endangers the lives of Jews and, as such, is condemned to death] who should be killed. We had ideas such as planting explosives in Rabin's car or gunning him down. [passage omitted]

It was disclosed today that the rabbi to whom Yig'al 'Amir sent 'Adani to receive spiritual sanction for the assassination is Rabbi Moshe Tzuri'el, his teacher at the Sha'alvim Yeshiva. Rabbi Tzuri'el denies that he spoke with 'Adani or anyone else about this issue. Tzuri'el wrote an essay, however, in which he referred to the top leaders as riffraff who should be treated accordingly. The police are considering summoning Rabbi Tzuri'el for interrogation, and this may happen in the near future. [end recording]

Avishay Raviv was interrogated today for the second time since his release from detention. He was questioned about the activity of the EYAL [Irgun Yehudi Lohem] movement, which he heads. He was interrogated in Tel Aviv rather than Petah Tiqva, apparently in order to elude the scores of correspondents and photographers who waited for him.

Three of Raviv's colleagues in the EYAL movement who were detained yesterday will be brought for an extension of their remand tomorrow. The three are suspected of incitement and sedition.

Baraq Decides To Grant Citizenship to Pollard

TA2111142095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 21 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Ehud Baraq has decided to grant Israeli citizenship to Jonathan Pollard who has spent the last 10 years in a U.S. prison for spying for Israel. Baraq made this decision — one of his last decisions as interior minister — after taking several factors into consideration, including consulting the Foreign Ministry's legal adviser Yo'el Singer.

In a letter to Pollard's attorneys, the interior minister says that the Israeli Government will continue to act for their client, as it has done to date. Our correspondent Gay Qotev points out that a few weeks ago Minister Baraq turned down Pollard's application for citizenship and subsequently Pollard filed an appeal to the High Court of Justice. The hearing of the appeal was scheduled to be held in a few weeks.

Lawyers Draw Comparison to Saudi Spy Case

TA2411074695 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] A new espionage case in the United States: A lieutenant colonel serving at a naval intelligence base in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, has been passing top secret information to the Saudi Arabian authorities for the past two years. The officer, Lieutenant Colonel Michael Schwartz, who, despite his name, is not Jewish, was arrested three months ago. The U.S. authorities have been making great efforts over the past few weeks to suppress the matter and keep the affair secret. In the wake of Saudi pressure, it has already been decided to settle for the officer's discharge from the U.S. Army. This was reported by our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen.

In reaction, Jonathan Pollard's attorneys said that the lack of symmetry between the sentence meted out to

Pollard and the lenient attitude toward Schwartz proves once again that Pollard should be released immediately.

Iraq Said To Have Considered Biological Attack

TA2411105395 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Nov 95 p A1

[Report by Ze'ev Schiff]

[FBIS Translated Text] Among the Iraqi documents seized recently by UN inspectors was a secret working paper drafted on the eve of the Gulf war and submitted to President Saddam Husayn which proposed to attack Israel with biological weapons. The proposal focused on the need for Iraq to launch an attack with biological weapons at its own initiative, rather than as retaliation for any attack by Israel. The paper is not an operational order or a document approving the use of such weapons against Israel, but it is defined as a "working paper" submitted to the top echelon of the Iraqi defense establishment and to President Saddam Husayn.

This information was obtained from circles close to the UN Special Commission on Iraq and from U.S. sources. This is the first disclosure of an Iraqi document dealing directly with the use of weapons of mass destruction against Israel.

The exposure of Iraq's development of biological weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, and ground-to-ground missiles is the reason Swedish diplomat Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission on Iraq, stated that these biological missile warheads pose a threat to the entire region even today.

The secret weapons were uncovered in the aftermath of the defection to Jordan of General Husayn Kamil, Saddam's son-in-law, when the UN inspectors went to Iraq to discuss Kamil's revelations. During their stay in Iraq, the UN inspectors managed to lay their hands on over 100 boxes of documents which had been buried at Kamil's farm. The Iraqi Government initially tried to prevent their confiscation, but Ekeus noted that his commission had nevertheless seized many important documents dealing with biological, nuclear, and chemical weapons, the production of ground-to-ground missiles, as well as drawings, photographs, and computer diskettes which are still being decoded by experts.

Ekeus summed up the work of his commission in a meeting held a few days ago at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He noted that the Iraqis have tried to put the blame on Gen. Kamil by saying that he had acted in contravention of Saddam's orders. Earlier, in July of this year, Iraq admitted that it had produced large quantities of anthrax and botulism bacteria, but denied that it had used them to produce weapons.

The new documents and talks with UN inspectors show that Iraq managed to produce 8,000 liters of concentrated anthrax bacteria, 19,000 liters of concentrated botulism bacteria, and 2,000 liters of applatoxin [as transliterated], as well as to mount 25 biological missile warheads and, starting in 1990, fill 166 bombs with biological agents. The bacteria were manufactured at the al-Hakkam installation, while the bombs and the missile warheads were assembled at the Muthanna plant. The Iraqis carried out research on other types of viruses and bacteria and successfully tested them on animals on several occasions.

The papers also reveal, and Iraqi experts admitted as much, that Iraq manufactured large quantities of the VX nerve gas which they then mounted on the warheads of al-Husayn missiles (fired toward Israel during the war). The documents further show that the Iraqis were developing missiles with longer ranges, of up to 2,000 km. Commenting on this point, Ekeus said that previous reports issued by his commission have now proved inaccurate and that he estimates that Iraq still has an unknown number of missiles that have not yet been uncovered. Seeing that Iraq may still have missile warheads mounted with biological agents, there is no avoiding the conclusion that this capability poses a threat to the entire region, Ekeus said.

His other conclusions were: The UN Special Commission on Iraq is actually uncertain about the current status of the biological weapons possessed by Iraq. Although Iraq claimed to have destroyed all these weapons in the summer of 1991, there is no proof to that effect, not even in the seized Iraqi papers. Neither does the commission have any proof that the large quantities of nerve gas have been destroyed. Seeing that even today Iraq is permitted to manufacture short-range missiles (up to 150 km) and that it has the capability to produce missiles with a longer range, there is no certainty about the status of this issue either.

In any event, Ekeus said, these disclosures call for alertness about Iraq's intentions.

Tunisian Official Barred From Gaza Strip Office

TA2211093795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel has decided to prevent the head of the Tunisian representation to the Palestinian autonomy from reaching his headquarters in the Gaza Strip. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz has learned that the decision was reached following

Tunisia's failure to keep its agreement with Israel and send a representative to the interests office that was slated to open in Tel Aviv in conjunction with the Tunisian representation in Gaza. Israel is also opposed to the participation of Tunisian representatives in the international observers force that will supervise the elections in the territories.

Peres Explains Portfolio Distribution

TA2211171095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Report by Gil Litman]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Giving his first interview as a sworn-in prime minister — probably his first interview since he began to form his government — Peres was calm, relaxed, and serene, as he has always been during interviews and in public addresses, particularly since Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination. His answers to all our questions were quite expansive. The first question was why did he decide to retain the defense portfolio:

[Begin recording] [Peres] Today, the defense portfolio is the line that runs between defense and peace. In other words, you cannot make peace without defense, and you cannot have defense without peace. That is the main reason why there is a need to oversee the undefined area between the foreign and defense spheres.

[Litman] Sir, what is the reason for Rabbi Yehuda 'Amital's ministerial appointment? Does it have to do with the settlers?

[Peres] Every government needs a bit of spirit. I think Rabbi 'Amital will endow the government with enough spirit to help us preserve national unity and hold a national dialogue. [end recording]

Another political question that was asked later concerned Ehud Baraq's appointment as foreign minister. Doesn't the fact that Uri Savir still heads the political negotiating team and Yosi Beilin has been made a minister in the Prime Minister's Office leave the foreign minister's job devoid of all content? Will he become a cocktail minister, as reporters have alluded to the position? Here is what Shim'on Peres replied:

[Begin recording] [Peres] The foreign minister represents the ministerial rank. When it was necessary to meet with 'Arafat, for instance, I met with him. Now Ehud will do it for me. As for Uri Savir, he has been the head of the joint team of representatives from the Prime Minister's Office, the army, and the Foreign Ministry, and he will continue in that role. There is no contradiction here. Everyone has a job to do. I have great confidence in Ehud, and I have very high esteem for Uri, who, I believe, is a man of many talents, a man who has done a wonderful job, and one whose talents will benefit the state. That is particularly true with regard to the negotiations with Syria, which require an expanded ministerial team that will draft policies. It seems logical to me, and I feel at ease working with such a team.

[Litman] You have made a public appeal to President al-Asad. What is the reason for it? Is it really possible that the political process with the Syrians will be accelerated?

[Peres] I emphasized in my address that the negotiations with Syria are, in fact, the negotiations that will end the war in the Middle East. Having made peace with Egypt and Jordan and being in the process of an endeavor to resolve the Palestinian problem, all that remains are the Syrian and Lebanese issues. We must understand that this time the negotiations are not with one country but rather with the entire region. This was my message to Syria. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Meretz Vetoes Understanding With NRP; NRP Ends Talks

TA2211150995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The new cabinet ministers have been sworn in at the Knesset and are due to report to the president. The government won the vote of confidence by a majority of 62 Knesset members [MK's]; eight voted against it, and 38 abstained.

The split of the YI'UD [Independent and Democratic Israel] faction did not prevent Gonen Segev from taking the oath as minister. It appears that the other YI'UD MK's, Goldfarb and Salmovich, did not complete the parliamentary maneuver they started, which was meant to deprive Segev of his right to hold a ministerial post as the representative of a three-man faction in the Knesset and to appoint Alex Goldfarb instead.

At the same time, Meretz decided to veto the document of understandings Minister Beilin discussed with the National Religious Party [NRP]. Minister Sarid told our correspondent that Labor tried to present Meretz with a fait accompli yesterday. For its part, the NRP has decided to suspend contacts with Labor until Meretz lifts its veto. If the Meretz veto is lifted, Refa'el Eytan will also be willing to promise that Tzomet will support the new government from the outside.

Peres To Continue Coalition Talks With NRP, Tzomet

TA2311055295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has decided to continue to negotiate with the National Religious Party [NRP] and Tzomet even after Meretz announced it was opposed to the document of understandings being discussed between Labor and the NRP.

Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili told our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel that if Meretz remains adamant in its opposition, one could not exclude the possibility that it might find itself outside the coalition. Zvili said that Labor will not ask Meretz for permission to reach understandings with the NRP. Meretz does not have the right to oppose any agreement that does not conflict with the government's guidelines and the coalition agreements.

It was reported last night that Ministers Moshe Shahal and Yosi Beilin have told representatives of the NRP, SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim], and United Torah Jewry that within a week they will come up with a proposal to resolve through legislation the problem of Reformist Jewish conversions. The High Court of Justice ruled that the Knesset must formulate a position on the issue within six months.

Meretz' Sadiq Threatens Withdrawal From Coalition

JN2311131595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0639 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Telephone interview with Walid Sadiq, Knesset member from the Meretz bloc, by Fathi al-Barqawi in Jericho; from the "A New Day" program — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Barqawi] Good morning Mr. Sadiq.

[Sadiq] Good morning.

[Al-Barqawi] It seems there is a crisis between the Labor Party and the Meretz movement of which you are a member.

[Sadiq] No doubt there is a crisis. The crisis is not confined to lobbies and salons but is being discussed by the people, television, radio, and the press. There is a real crisis between the Peres government, or rather between Peres and the Labor Party and Meretz. For the past four days, Mr. Peres has been flirting and maneuvering with certain religious parties, especially the Mafdal [National Religious Party], which is extremist and rightist from the national, political, and religious viewpoints. We do not like this at all. If there is more seriousness and an agreement is reached between this party and the religious party on the one hand and the Labor Party on the other, then there will be a cabinet crisis because Meretz will leave this coalition which will neither serve peace nor equality inside Israel.

[Al-Barqawi] But you are aware that it has been one of Peres' historical wishes to bring together the labor and the religious parties?

[Sadiq] Yes, this is a historical fact. Rabin's government was the only one in Israel's history that did not contain religious elements. However, it seems that Peres has succumbed to his habits. The moment he was asked to form a government, Peres began negotiations, through Minister Beilin. This issue could undermine the entire coalition with Meretz. We are perfectly aware of the dimensions and dangers that could result from including the Mafdal and the religious parties in this government. In other words, the peace process will be paralyzed and the issue of equality which was followed by the Rabin government will end.

[Al-Barqawi] Mr. Sadiq you are a politician. Playing with political cards is sometimes legitimate, is not that so?

[Sadiq] Everything is possible in politics but as far as we are concerned, we entered the Rabin government with one aim; namely, to strive for peace in the Middle East especially for the Palestinian people. We cannot deviate from this principle. We do not want to harm the special status which Meretz has in this government. Therefore, any confusion resulting from gathering into this government more than the coalition partners by bringing in the religious elements will perfectly counter the principles which we uphold and for which we struggled. I believe we have greatly influenced Mr. Rabin and we diverted him to the real course which we wanted in the past.

[Al-Barqawi] In politics there is also dishonest work? Are we exactly up against a dishonest game?

[Sadiq] I believe this is a correct term to use. Mr. Peres now may not be thinking of the subject of peace and equality but in terms of how the 1996 election will be won. We are aware that in 1996 there will be a direct election for the prime minister's office. He takes for granted that Meretz, the Labor Party, and most or even all of the Arab parties to elect him because the only alternative is Binyamin Netanyahu. The left will of course elect Peres. We believe that this maneuver and this dishonest game, in my opinion, will attempt to muster the support of the largest number of religious elements. However, we are aware that this year is very crucial and dangerous; it may bring good results but it may bring bad results if the peace process is not activated quickly and in a reasonable manner. We cannot waste an entire year looking forward to the 1996 election results and ignoring the issue of peace.

[Al-Barqawi] You have mentioned the possibility of the withdrawal of Meretz. Can we consider this a serious intention?

[Sadiq] It is serious in the full sense of the word. According to the agreement reached between the Labor and Mafdal parties, the Labor Party sometimes gives the Mafdal the veto power — for instance, to remove all traces of the Palestinian Authority in Jerusalem. Any action on the settlements will be based on Mafdal's agreement. There are so many other things that affect the very principles in which we believe.

[Al-Barqawi] Then we must be vigilant. Thank You, Mr. Walid Sadiq.

[Sadiq] Thank you.

Foreign Ministry Welcomes Bosnian Peace Accord

JN2311180095 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordan has welcomed the declaration issued in Dayton, Ohio announcing that all parties to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina have reached a peace agreement, thus ending a bloody four-year war.

In a statement issued today, the Foreign Ministry hopes that the parties concerned will commit themselves to implementing the provisions of the agreement. It also hopes that the international community will consolidate efforts to eliminate the destructive effects of the civil war in Bosnia, reconstruct it, end the suffering of and injustice done to its peoples, and enable them to live in security and peace according to human rights principles and international charters. In its statement, the Foreign Ministry thanks all countries which contributed to reaching this historic agreement.

King Said To Meet Iraqi Opposition in London

MM2311112295 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Nov 95 p 4

[Report by 'Adnan Husayn: "King Husayn Meets With Iraqi Oppositionists in London"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Reliable sources in the British capital have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that King Husayn of Jordan, who is currently in London on a private visit, met yesterday, in two separate meetings, with a number of Iraqi oppositionists living in the British capital. The sources said that the two meetings dealt with current conditions in Iraq. A Jordanian official made contact last week with representatives of Iraqi opposition groups and independent figures. According to some of the figures with whom the Jordanian official met, the Jordanian capital is thinking of inviting a number of Iraqi oppositionists to meet with King Husayn and a number of senior officials.

Prince Hasan Meets Saudi Ambassador, Stresses Ties

JN2211181595 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, has met the newly-appointed Saudi Ambassador to Jordan Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Sudayri. The ambassador conveyed to his royal highness the greetings and congratulations of Saudi King Fahd to His Majesty King Husayn on his 60th birthday.

The regent stressed the strong ties between Jordan and Saudi Arabia, which were in line with the principles of the two countries which seek to foster closer Arab ties and pan-Arab action in this crucial phase of the Arab nation's history. This phase, he said, required collective action and efforts to achieve high levels of progress and prosperity for the peoples of the region.

The Saudi ambassador welcomed Jordan's efforts to achieve Arab rapprochement and sustain economic progress in the region, particularly after the highly successful Middle East and North Africa economic summit in Amman.

SLA's Lahd: No Changes in Policy on Security Zone

TA2311105495 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 23 Nov 95 p 12

[Report by David Rudge]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] South Lebanese Army [SLA] Commander Gen. Antoine Lahd says he does not anticipate any changes in Israel's policy towards the security zone following the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

"I don't foresee any changes because in my opinion the policy of Israel towards the security zone in particular is a permanent one," Lahd said yesterday. "I'm sure that the same policy will be continued by Prime Minister Shim'on Peres and will remain the same even in the event of a change in government."

Lahd spoke during a visit to the "Voice of the South" radio station inside the security zone to mark Lebanese Independence Day, also attended by the government's coordinator on Lebanon Uri Lubrani and senior IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA officers.

Asked if there is a correlation between the relative quiet in the security zone since Rabin's murder and the peace overtures from Damascus, Lahd said: "Hizballah is, of course, a movement which is tied to Iran, but those who orchestrate its activities are the Syrians and if, as you say, there is a lull, then it seems likely that there is a connection between the two things.

"I can't really say anything about Syria's desire for peace. Nevertheless, I assume that the recent developments in the world, including the Bosnian peace accord that was signed on Tuesday [21 November], and the agreements in the Arab world, especially Jordan, are bringing Syria to the negotiating table."

Asked if Israel might now overlook its commitments to the SLA and the security zone in its search for peace accords with Syria and Lebanon, Lahd said: "I have absolutely no worry on this point because Israel has deep-rooted interests regarding the security zone and we, the residents of the zone, also have an interest in maintaining our ties with Israel.

"I don't believe, for one minute, that Israel would ever break its obligations to the security zone. The zone itself is basically the front line of peace, and all those working against peace, such as Hizballah and Palestinian rejectionists, are acting against the zone."

Lubrani said it is too early to assess signals coming from Damascus indicating a renewed willingness to negotiate. "It's part of the dynamics of the process. I think what's happening is that through this tragic change of government, the Syrians believe they might have an opportunity to do something for themselves in making progress on their track."

Nevertheless, Lubrani said he feels there may be a new "window of opportunity" for negotiations with the Syrians. "I think that there is a new impetus and a new feeling that things might get moving. There are political agendas in place for Israel and for the US, and I think that there is also a political agenda for the Syrian president. We will just have to see whether these coalesce and whether, hopefully, there will be progress."

Lubrani said Hizballah is still trying to launch attacks and will undoubtedly continue to do so. "Syria definitely has some influence with Hizballah, but whether it is exercising its influence at this particular point in time I cannot say," he said.

"Hizballah, however, has not been quiet. There is not a day that has passed without them trying to do something. Fortunately we have been able either to pre-empt or deal with these...

"If you ask me.... we can expect to see more activities on the part of Hizballah, unfortunately. I see no signs that it is changing its policies, because for Hizballah it's business as usual."

It remained relatively quiet on the ground in south Lebanon with only one incident reported — an attempted attack, apparently by members of the Amal Shiite movement, on an SLA position in Bra'shit in the zone's western sector.

Reports from Lebanon said IDF and SLA gunners spotted a squad of gunmen in the area and opened fire and that IAF [Israel Air Force] helicopter gunships were also called in. Two Amal gunmen were reported wounded.

Individuals Seized by Hizballah for 'Spying' Named

NC2411073995 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 20 Nov 95 pp 14-15

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The following is a list of some of those arrested by Hizballah on charges of spying for and collaborating with the Zionist enemy. [passage omitted]

1. Wasif al-Kazim, born in al-Bustan in Tyre District. He was arrested by Hizballah on 15 October 1995.

2. Muhammad Wayzani, born in Shaqra in Bint Jubayl District. He was arrested by Hizballah on 20 October 1995.

3. Kamil Khalaf, born in Shaqra in Bint Jubayl District. He was arrested by Hizballah on 21 October 1995.

4. Hasan 'Armush, born in Palestine. He was arrested by Hizballah on 22 October 1995.

5. Nijmah al-'Alam, born in Rumaysh in Bint Jubayl District. She was arrested on 22 October 1995 and handed over to the Lebanese Army. Her husband Sim'an Jarjurah was then arrested. A communications device, aerial pictures, documents, and maps were seized in their home.

6. Riyad Basal, born in al-Suwwanah. He was arrested by Hizballah on 27 October 1995.

7. Fu'ad Abu-Khalil, born in al-Qulaylah in Tyre District. He was arrested by Hizballah on 29 October 1995.

8. Adib Shararah, born in Bint Jubayl and a resident of al-'Abbasiyah. He was arrested by Hizballah on 29 October 1995. Listening and communications devices were found in his home. He used to attach these devices to electric wires in people's homes. He owned an electric generator and supplied neighboring houses with electricity.

9. 'Abdallah Suwaydan, born in Yatar in Bint Jubayl District. He was arrested by Hizballah on 30 October 1995.

10. Muhammad Kurani, born in Yatar. He was arrested by Hizballah on 1 November 1995.

11. Muhammad Suwaydan, born in Zawtar al-Gharbiyah. A sophisticated device was found hidden in a small safe box in his home. [passage omitted]

Hizballah Denies Training Bahraini Oppositionists

NC2311074895 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah has denied reports that Shiite opposition figures from Bahrain are taking training courses in Hizballah camps in Lebanon. In a statement, Hizballah said these reports are groundless.

The Saudi newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday published fabricated reports to this effect.

AL-THAWRAH on Ross' Tour, Peres' Statements

JN2311103895 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0820 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 23 Nov (SANA) — In its political commentary today, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says that Syria welcomes the U.S. efforts and that it is ready to seriously and constructively cooperate on every endeavor that would advance the peace process. The paper adds that Syria adheres to the peace process, which it considers a precious opportunity that all parties should seize to attain the goal of a just and comprehensive peace —which preserves everybody's rights, interests, and dignity.

The paper notes: U.S. Coordinator Dennis Ross, who will return to the region next week, will encounter no significant difficulties in Syria in his new mission. On the contrary, he will sense anew that Syria cooperates honestly and genuinely with the U.S. efforts and that it is ready to embark on serious and fruitful talks. Such talks should help achieve positive and satisfactory results and boost optimism vis-a-vis the possibility of making a significant progress that would rid the peace process of the circle of failure and stagnation and put it on the right track.

AL-THAWRAH points out: Syria's desire alone is not enough to realize the required progress. The other party should have a similar desire so that it will be possible to make reasonable achievements that would lay the foundations for peace. Now that Rabin has been murdered and Peres has formed his new government and issued some optimistic statements on the peace process, we cannot but wait and see what Ross will get from Peres' government and whether this government will change the previous Israeli positions or continue to cling to the same futile ideas and concepts, which precluded in the past any progress on the Syrian track.

The paper expresses hope that Ross will come up with positive results in his upcoming tour. It also hopes that the U.S. efforts will succeed in persuading Israel to tread the right path and comply with all the requirements entailed by the just and comprehensive peace. It adds: The ball now is in the court of Israel, which should prove, in deeds and not in words, the truth of its peace intentions.

Radio Underlines Commitment to 'Genuine Peace'

JN2211153195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1237 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Everybody knows that the Syrian position toward all issues, particularly crucial ones, is clear and firm. What Syria said in the past few days is not different, in form or substance, from what it said in the past. Syria adopted peace as a strategic option. Naturally, it welcomes any step or initiative that would help establish the aspired-for peace. It also supports any effort in that direction.

The aspired-for peace is the just, comprehensive, sustainable, and lasting peace. Syria's view on the form and substance of this peace is clear and firm, and has not changed. It is the kind of peace which all parties would accept, the peace that would return to each party its rights, the peace that would end all manifestations of occupation, and it is the peace that is based on international legitimacy, the UN Security Council resolutions, and the U.S. initiative.

Contrary to what Israel claims, Syria is not setting any conditions when it insists that peace should be based on these principles and bases. The only Syrian condition is that peace must be in accordance with the aforementioned principles, which are supported by the world. This means complete withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 lines and from southern Lebanon, and the introduction of equal and parallel security measures on both sides of the borders.

This Syrian demand — which Israel calls a condition — reflects a complete and precise commitment to the principles of peace on which the Madrid Conference was based.

Therefore, Syria believes that he who tries to evade and ignore these principles and avoid commitment to them is evading peace and placing conditions, and, consequently, is responsible for delaying or preventing the achievement of peace.

Syria has very clearly said that it wants peace. It knows exactly what it says and is ready to fulfill the requirements of peace. However, the question remains: Does Israel really want peace? If it indeed wants peace, then it should clearly state — as Syria did — that it accepts and is committed to the UN Security Council resolutions and the U.S. land-for-peace initiative. Israel must realize that peace is a crucial issue which cannot be subject to any bargaining or trading. Peace must be comprehensive and just, or there will never be peace. One must derive lessons from the previous attempts to divide peace and avoid its requirements and components to acquire both land and peace. The road to genuine peace must guarantee the rights, security, and dignity of all parties.

Press: Peres Needs To Match Words With Deeds

JN2311081495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary entitled "Deeds, Not Words," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: Throughout the drawn-out and meandering peace process, Syria has never asked for anything other than its rights and territories. It has never set any conditions for the achievement of peace other than the return of these rights and territories. Its position in this regard is fair, because true, just, and comprehensive peace cannot be predicated on partial withdrawals or flawed deals or concessions. Hard facts, as well as the contacts, talks, and meetings held between Syrian officials and world officials, chief among which are the Americans, have shown that Syria has responded favorably to peace overtures and has expressed a willingness to meet its objective requirements on the basis of the premise of complete withdrawal in exchange for just peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: It is Israel alone which procrastinated, prevaricated, and circumvented the essence and requirements of peace, because it has never contemplated complete withdrawal. It only entertains the notion of partial withdrawals and concluding flawed agreements. It does not want to move toward the implementation of the relevant international resolutions. Israel is evading the requirements of peace, chief among which is complete withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and the rest of the occupied Arab territories. It only seeks to use the peace process to achieve selfish and narrow interests.

AL-THAWRAH continues: Israeli officials have spoken of their willingness to expedite negotiations on the Syrian track, and consequently on the Lebanese track, to achieve comprehensive peace in the region. They are well aware that such peace is impossible to achieve without Syria. Thus, they have implicitly acknowledged that the government of Yitzhaq Rabin, who was assassinated by an extremist Jewish fundamentalist, was to blame for creating obstacles and slowing down progress on the Syrian track.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying: Now, the Israeli officials are speaking of the need for expedited talks on the Syrian track. They are engaged in self-deception. For they believe that deceptive tactics can still work. They are paying lip service to the cause of peace. To make progress in the peace talks, the Israeli Government needs to make up its mind with regard to peace. Once it does, we will judge it by its acts and deeds rather than its words.

Under the headline "Peres' Government is Facing a Choice and an Opportunity," the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: Shim'on Peres formed a new Israeli cabinet. He asserted that his government will continue its efforts to achieve peace. He hoped that there will be comprehensive peace by the turn of the century. He gave the public the impression that his government is a pro-peace government. He also indicated that the Israeli people are unanimous on the need to restart peace talks with Syria.

AL-BA'TH adds: In the aftermath of Rabin's murder, Shim'on Peres said that he cherishes peace more than an election win. He, along with other Israeli officials, underlined the importance of peace with Syria.

AL-BA'TH goes on to say: We do not want to prejudge Peres, or to question his intentions, however, based on our experience with the peace process over the past few years, we have learned to trust acts rather than words. Much was said about peace and the need to activate the peace process and render it a success when Yitzhaq Rabin formed his own cabinet in the aftermath of the Labor Party's election win, however, Israel's intransigence grew in intensity and the Rabin government placed further obstacles and difficulties in the way of the peace process, which has been greatly weakened. Peres was keen to say that he is following the steps, policies, and positions of Yitzhaq Rabin. Nonetheless, he did not hesitate to make statements and pronouncements on the disputed issues on the Syrian track of negotiations. He said that he will not stick to Rabin's positions and that he will not focus on a single topic to the exclusion of others. If he means what he says, Peres needs to match words with deeds. He also needs to abandon the intransigent and adverse positions behind which Rabin entrenched himself, thus creating obstacles that precluded progress in talks on the Syrian track. Moreover, he is required to take a new and clear position, one that is in line with the terms of reference of the peace process, chief among which is the formula of trading land for peace — all the land, not half the land, nor one quarter of the land, nor even three quarters of the land.

AL-BA'TH concludes by saying: Peres cannot remain content with upholding slogans about peace and the peace process, and with expressing a desire to end the state of war. He needs to utter the word that is needed to activate the peace process on the Syrian track and to remove the obstacles plaguing this process. For its part, Syria has championed peace from the outset. It has adhered to the bases of the peace process and extended the required cooperation in all sincerity to achieve the objective set for this process. It will continue to do so.

Israeli Statements Characterized by 'Some Responsibility'

JN2411080095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0550 GMT 24 Nov 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-BA'TH notes recent statements by Israeli officials which are characterized by some responsibility toward peace and the Syrian track. These statements acknowledge that peace without Syria is meaningless.

The paper adds that Israeli officials should focus on what is important for peace. Israeli officials, as usual, express a desire for peace and deliberately forget the many foundations on which peace is based.

AL-BA'TH adds: What is required is ending occupation and aggression. Peace, therefore, will be a natural result if the aggressor abandons his aggressive policy. Everybody knows that ending Israel's occupation and aggression is a good prelude to stability and security in the region. The Madrid conference was a cause for optimism. Everyone looks forward to a day when Israeli officials will strongly move for peace instead of giving orders of bombardment, murder, and destruction against Lebanon and its people.

The paper goes on: What is required goes beyond making statements to promote real optimism about peace. Taking the initiative and making decisions in line with international legitimacy is enough to open the doors of peace in the entire region.

In one of its commentaries today, AL-THAWRAH says Syria wants peace and is serious about achieving it on the basis of the implementation of the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy. This is the clear path to achieve a just and comprehensive peace that is blessed by the whole world.

The newspaper says: Syria adopted a very clear and specific position on peace. To be clearer, Syria has repeatedly said that it wants a full Israeli withdrawal in return for a full peace.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Despite this clear Syrian stance, Israeli officials still reject the foundations of peace and refuse to declare openly their adherence to its well-known principles. Those officials, contrary to all laws of our age, are still seeking to evade the requirements of peace and weasel out of commitment to UN resolutions. This is especially the case since Syria's specific position has embarrassed them and exposed their misleading stance before the whole world. The Israeli officials do not want peace because it contradicts their strategy of aggression, expansion, and annexation.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH notes that Israel's political actions are still characterized by tactics and maneuvering. For more than four and a half years now, Israel's political performance has been governed by a policy of intransigence, stubbornness, and rejection of the principle of full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. Israel has been looking for ways to circumvent the Madrid framework and the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Security Council. By doing this, Israel seeks to consolidate its hegemony and occupation and to achieve what it failed to achieve by military aggression.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The whole world, and the U.S. sponsor in particular, know that peace is a commitment and strategic option for Syria, however, this is not at any price and not for an indefinite time. The ceiling of this peace is specified by the resolutions of international legitimacy and the U.S. initiative, and this is what Syria is demanding as a basis for a solution that can end the conflict in this region.

The newspaper says the stumbling block that obstructs progress is Israel's position and its noncompliance with the principles of peace. These principles require full withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and the rest of the other occupied Arab territories.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: Israel must prove its credibility toward peace. Words must be transformed into deeds and concrete actions that reflect commitment to the Madrid framework and the relevant international resolutions, so peace can see daylight.

Commentary Notes 'Discouraging' Israeli Signals on Peace

JN2311160195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: Israeli officials talk much about the peace process, but without adding anything new to the known Israeli positions in this regard. However, Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' statement in which he said that peace is more important than elections aroused the interest of observers and those following the peace process in this region and the world at large. On this basis, those concerned with the peace process assumed that Shim'on Peres' statement giving peace precedence over elections may carry something new or signal a development in the Israeli position. However, if we monitor the statements made by some Israeli officials, we — away from any optimism or pessimism — will find that the Israeli position remains the same as it was before Shim'on Peres' assumption of the Israeli premiership.

While Prime Minister Peres says that peace is more important than elections, one of his ministers, Ehud Baraq, is still making statements about withdrawal from parts of the occupied Golan and not from the entire occupied Golan. Moreover, he worded this expansionist, anti-peace stand in a complicated manner. He said that from a professional and specialized point of view, as he put it — in fact from the military and colonialist point of view — it is preferable to remain in the Golan in the peace era, too. There is no need to read out the remainder of Ehud Baraq's statement, because this statement alone is enough to return the peace process to the state of dormancy from which it has not yet awakened. Ehud Baraq's statement is not the only discouraging signal emitted by Israel recently. Yosi Beilin, a minister in the new Israeli Government, said that the basic issue in the discussions with Syria is the security arrangements and the areas which Israel will be ready to evacuate in case it attains appropriate security arrangements, as he put it. In other words, this Israeli minister is still talking about partial withdrawal, by which Israel has so far obstructed the peace process.

The emission of those negative signals by some Israeli officials does not encourage one to suppose that there is any change in the Israeli position, despite Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' statement, which aroused observers' interest for giving peace precedence over the elections in Israel. In addition to those negative signals, Peres' statement itself needs to be developed, especially in light of the U.S. Administration's new move of dispatching Dennis Ross, coordinator of the peace process at the U.S. State Department, to Israel.

Lifting the peace process from dormancy depends on the positive development of the Israeli position. Proceeding from its pan-Arab principles, Syria has given the peace process every help since the beginning. Syria made it clear that it offers full peace in return for full Israeli withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 lines. In other words, it offers full peace in return for the removal of all forms of occupation, including the settlements, from the occupied territories in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Besides, Syria is ready to establish balanced [mutawazinah], equitable [mutakafi'ah], and equal [mutasawiyah] security arrangements on the two sides to remove the security fears on the two sides and at the same time.

Israeli officials constantly say that peace is not possible without Syria. By saying so, if they want to note or assert a certain fact, they have already done so. But, if by that they refer to the activation of the peace process, this activation, specifically positive activation, requires development of the Israeli position in line with the resolutions of the international community. Those resolutions are the basis of the Syrian position in the peace process. In other words, Israel has to accept the land-for-peace principle and full withdrawal in return for full peace.

As a full partner to the peace process, the U.S. Administration can or is supposed to lead the Israeli position to the required positive development toward peace for this region. This development must respect the resolutions of international legitimacy and the bases of the peace process, epitomized by ensuring the rights, dignity, and security of all sides according to fair and comprehensive logic.

Defense Minister Addresses Air Academy Graduates

JN2311213895 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Under the patronage of President Hafiz al-Asad, commander in chief of the Syrian Army and Armed Forces, and on the 25th anniversary of the glorious Corrective Movement, a new class of pilots, technicians, and navigators was graduated from the Air Academy today. Lieutenant General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Syrian Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, deputized for the president. [passage omitted]

Amid resounding chants in support of the Ba'th Party and its Secretary General struggler President Hafiz al-Asad, Lt. Gen. Mustafa Talas, representative of the commander in chief, delivered a speech. At the outset of the speech, Lt. Gen. Talas conveyed commander al-Asad's greetings and wishes of success to the graduates in their new tasks. [passage omitted]

Lt. Gen. Talas spoke about the peace process in the region. He noted that Israel is still trying to slip away from the requirements of a just peace. Foremost of these requirements is a full withdrawal from the occupied territories to the 4 June 1967 borders and the absence of any symbols of occupation under any pretext whatsoever.

He added that with its principled stand, true desire to achieve peace, and continuous cooperation with international efforts to push forward the peace process in the region, al-Asad's Syria will not go back on its objective to achieve a real and just peace. He noted that Syria proceeds with this stand from the wisdom of its leader Hafiz al-Asad, when he said: In the battle for peace, we derive our strength from our people and their capabilities, from our brave Armed Forces — the protectors of the homeland, and from the abundant resources of our country. We are waging this battle on bases which do not include bargaining over rights and principles. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

Iran Reportedly Turns Down Dialogue With Taleban

*BK2311150195 Hong Kong AFP in English
1447 GMT 23 Nov 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov 23 (AFP) — Iran has turned down offers of dialogue from the Taleban militia which has seized control of almost half of neighbouring Afghanistan, Deputy Foreign Minister Alaeddin Borujerdi said Thursday [23 November].

He said officials of the Islamic students movement had contacted Iranian missions in Pakistan and the western Afghan city of Herat to request a dialogue with Iranian authorities.

"They have asked to send a delegation to Iran, but so far we have not agreed," he told the newspaper IRAN. Taleban is a "new phenomenon and we need to study it more before taking a decision."

Iranian officials and the media have made no secret of their dislike for the militia, which they say is being manipulated by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United States to check Tehran's influence in Afghanistan.

The Taleban have captured a key government military stronghold east of the capital as they stepped up their drive to seize Kabul, Afghan defence officials said Thursday.

'Foreign Intervention' Blamed for Continued Fighting

*LD2311120895 Tehran IRNA in English
1129 GMT 23 Nov 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Nov. 23, IRNA — The spokesman for the Afghan president has said that as long as groups opposed to the Kabul government insist on war, it would be meaningless to speak about transfer of power to a commission acceptable to all Afghan groups.

The spokesman, Abdulaziz Murad said on Wednesday [22 November] that intensification of fighting around the Afghan capital in recent days had endangered the U.N. special envoy Mahmoud Mestiri's peace plan.

According to the spokesman, blamed foreign intervention for continued crisis in Afghanistan and military pressures being exerted by the Afghan student militias, Taliban. He also warned that as long as foreign countries continued to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs, conflict in that country would continue.

Murad once again announced the Afghan Government's readiness for transfer of power, expressing hope that a peaceful solution would be find to the crises in his country.

He noted that talks were underway with certain opposition groups with an aim of patching up differences in parallel with efforts of the UN special envoy for Afghanistan.

He once again accused Pakistan of backing the Taleban in their fight against President Borhanoddin Rabbani's government.

Fighting Said To Continue in Khvord Kabul Area

*LD2211122395 Tehran IRNA in English
0840 GMT 22 Nov 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Nov. 22, IRNA — Fierce battles between the Taleban militia and state troops still continue at the Khvord Kabul region, located some 30 km southeast of the Afghan capital, and the hills overlooking the area. An Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman said on Tuesday night that government troops during the day halted four attempts of the Taleban to advance in the region. Between Monday night and Tuesday noon, Taleban fighters captured Khvord Kabul, Chekri and some strategic hills in the vicinity that were under the government's sway.

A spokesman of the Afghan Defense Ministry, Amrollah, also said state bomber planes repeatedly pounded Taleban positions in the region destroying one tank and three heavy artillery. A number of the Taleban troops were also killed or wounded in the air raids, he added. It was also reported that Taleban warplanes flew thrice over Kabul on Tuesday but fled when confronted state anti-aircraft guns.

Government positions in western Kabul and the Chahar Asiab region were also bombarded by the group but no casualties have been announced yet.

However, Afghan government sources claimed Taleban jets could not fly the long distance between Kandahar and Kabul and presumed that they take off from a base at Peshawar in Pakistan.

Government Admits Losing Base to Taleban

*BK2311065495 Hong Kong AFP in English
0638 GMT 23 Nov 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KABUL, Nov 23 (AFP) — Afghan government forces admitted Thursday [23 November] they had lost the key military base of Pol-e-Charkhi just east of Kabul to the advancing Taleban militia.

The Taleban said earlier they had taken Pol-e Charkhi, around 10 kilometers (six miles) east of Kabul and nearby Butkhak.

The Taleban Islamic militia have made major gains this week in their campaign to take the capital from forces loyal to President President Borhanoddin Rabbani.

The Defence Ministry in Kabul said it had lost the military base at Pol-e-Charkhi, a former jail, but that government forces still controlled the nearby town of the same name. The ministry said it was confident the lost ground could be won back.

Futher on 'Captured' Town

BK2311113595 Hong Kong AFP in English
1119 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Nov 23 (AFP) — The Taleban militia captured a key Afghan Government military stronghold east of Kabul as they stepped up their drive to seize Kabul, defence officials said Thursday [23 November].

The Islamic militia overran five more kilometers (three miles) of government-held territory, the Defence Ministry said, but claims that the Taleban had taken a strategically crucial village were found to be untrue.

The Taleban, who have been rolling over government positions east of the besieged Afghan capital for the past two days, captured a former jail converted into an army base in Pol-e Charkhi, officials said.

The prison fell into Taleban hands after a government forces commander and his men switched to the militia side and handed over the base, Lieutenant General Bashir Salange told AFP on the new frontline near the prison.

The Taleban also claimed they had taken the town of Pol-e Charkhi.

A senior Taleban official Mufti Massoom, based in Pakistan, told AFP earlier that the Islamic militia had completely taken Pol-e Charkhi.

But reporters at the scene saw the town, about three kilometers (1.8 kilometres) from the jail, remained under government control.

Foreign observers said the capture of Pol-e Charkhi by the Taleban would deal a fatal blow to [word indistinct] administration of President Borhanoddin Rabbani.

It lies on the crucial eastern artery linking Kabul with the city of Jalalabad and Pakistan, the capital's main lifeline to the outside world.

If the militia were to secure the road, they would also gain access to the highway leading to Kabul's only working airport at Bagram — about 60 kilometers (37 miles) north of here.

But commanders of the presidential troops ruled out losing either Pol-e-Charkhi village or the key road.

"A turncoat was responsible for the loss of the prison, but I can guarantee that the Taleban will not be in that base for long and that they will never take the village," Salange, a top government commander, said.

"The road is secure, traffic is moving freely and the route has not come under attack. It will remain safe," he said.

He added that the strongly-fortified prison compound had come under intense government rocket and artillery barrages throughout the night, and that it had been severely battered by repeated aerial bombing raids.

With their latest gains, the Taleban, apparently spurred by their battlefield successes, had on the seventh day of solid fighting in the area taken of more than 20 kilometers (12 miles) of land from retreating government forces since early Tuesday.

But a Defence Ministry official said the latest government loss was reversible, adding that Rabbani's military strongman and former Defence Minister Ahmed Shah Mas'ud had taken personal command of the bid to drive the Taleban back south.

"This is a setback, but not a major setback. We are still confident we can reclaim the lost territory and repulse the Taleban. We are still strong," a defence official said.

Kabul is already blockaded on three key fronts by the Islamic fighters, and a new frontline to its east would make it vulnerable to seizure by the Taleban, military analysts said.

Worried residents of east Kabul were Thursday loading their few possessions onto buses and trucks before leaving for safer Jalalabad or relatives homes. The army was meanwhile bolstering its defensive positions around the city.

The Taleban have vowed to bring down Rabbani's government and to impose Islamic law on Afghanistan.

Armed Forces Reportedly Kill 125 Taleban Near Kabul

LD2311174395 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] During yesterday's fighting southeast of Kabul, 125 men of Benazir Bhutto's Taleban were killed. Twenty tanks and armored vehicles of the Taleban were set on fire.

A source of the armed forces reported to Bakhtar that as a result of yesterday morning's clashes in Yakhdara region, 35 men of Benazir Bhutto's Taleban were killed. These so-called Taleban were killed when the armed forces surrounded them after an ambush. During this operation two enemy Datsun motor vehicles were destroyed and another Datsun was seized as booty. As a result of yesterday evening's air attack, 90 mercenary Taleban were killed in the direction of Band-e Ghazi [20 km southeast of Kabul], and six tanks together with 14 supply lorries of the invaders were destroyed.

The intensive artillery fire and bombardments on the enemy took place at the time when the Taleban group was trying to take up new positions. Heavy losses forced the Taleban group to withdraw their men and to take shelter on the mountainsides. In this operation one enemy ammunition depot which was reported to have been stored in two containers was set on fire. Benazir Bhutto's Taleban have now perceived the extent of their misfortune when the government forces retreated from a number of positions. [sentence as heard]

Kabul Receives Supplies; Jalalabad Road Said Open

LD2311184095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dozens of trucks carrying basic essential goods arrived in Kabul last night and today along the Kabul-Jalalabad highway.

In visiting Kabul's Mandawi food market the correspondent of Bakhtar reports: These trucks were carrying flour, cooking oil, rice, and sugar. After the arrival of these trucks, the price of one bag of flour fell by 5,000 Afghanis. A noticeable reduction was also seen in the prices of cooking oil, sugar, and rice.

'Abdol Mobin, one of our compatriots, said: Despite the fact that Benazir Bhutto's Taleban have imposed an economic blockade on Kabul city and have been preventing foodstuffs and fuel from reaching Kabul, foodstuffs, praise be to God are plentiful in the city.

Zalmai, one of the drivers who arrived in Kabul last night via the Kabul-Jalalabad highway, said: The Kabul-Jalalabad highway is completely open to traffic and I arrived in Kabul without any hindrance.

The convoys of foodstuffs have been arriving in Kabul normally since several days ago and this trend has been continuing.

The arrival of foodstuffs in Kabul indicates that last night's report and propaganda by the BBC's correspondent from Kabul — saying that the Kabul-Jalalabad road was under the control of the Taleban group and this group is preventing goods from reaching Kabul — was completely incorrect.

Taleban Reportedly Shoots Down MiG Fighter

BK2411030695 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Fierce fighting is raging in Afghanistan in the outskirts of Kabul, with the Taleban claiming that troops of the 4th Corps have surrendered and that a government MiG jet fighter has been shot down. According to Taleban sources, they have also captured another town, Hoodkheyl. The sources added that the Taleban are fighting to capture Tappeh-ye Maranjan in the outskirts of Kabul and are continuing their advance toward the Bagram airport, the government's only communication link with the outside world.

Meanwhile, a Defense Ministry official said in Kabul that government troops Have attacked Taleban in Pol-e Charkhi and Butkhak areas, which Taleban captured during the fighting on Wednesday [22 November]. Radio Kabul reported that pro-Rabbani Air Force planes attacked Taleban positions in Band-e Ghazi, southeast of Kabul, inflicting heavy losses on them. The report could not be independently confirmed, but a Taleban spokesman has denied it.

Bangladesh

Election Schedule Announced; Zia Issues Statement

BK2211141895 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1200 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Polling will be held on 15 December to elect Members of Parliament for filling up the 145 vacant seats of the Parliament. The schedule for the holding of this by-election was announced by the Election Commission today. Nominations should be submitted to the returning officers or assistant returning officers on Friday, 24 November. Scrutiny of the nomination papers will be held on Saturday, 25 November. The last date for withdrawal of nomination papers is 29 November.

The Election Commission has appointed 54 returning officers and 300 assistant returning officers for conducting the elections to the 145 vacant seats of the Parliament.

[Hong Kong AFP in English at 1152 GMT on 22 Nov in a Dhaka dateline item adds the following: "Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has asked the opposition to take part in upcoming by-elections to pave the way for an interim government and national polls early next year. 'Let us form an interim national government for the period of (general) elections. The opposition can cooperate in the formation of this government by contesting in the upcoming by-election,' Zia said in a statement published Wednesday.

["Zia, who has faced a 19-month opposition campaign seeking her resignation and fresh elections under a neutral caretaker administration, did not elaborate on the constitution of the national government. But a senior ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader said on condition of anonymity that it would be close to Zia's earlier offer of a 10-member cabinet split half and half between government and opposition MPs. Asked if the government would impose emergency measures if the current crisis led to a confrontation, he only said the government would follow the 'laws of the land.' Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, the BNP's acting secretary-general told AFP the constitution of the national government was open to discussion, adding there 'is still time for a settlement. But a senior leader and ex-MP of the main opposition Awami League, Abdur Razzak, termed Zia's latest offer as 'misleading'. He told AFP the opposition would accept nothing short of its demand for a 'neutral caretaker government.' Oppositions groups jointly termed the offer as 'new wine in an old bottle.'

["Zia in an apparent ultimatum to her political rivals warned in the statement issued late Tuesday by her BNP that she would ask the president to dissolve the parliament if the opposition refused to take part in the by-elections.

["The opposition, led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed's Awami League, has vowed to intensify its street demonstrations unless Zia accepts 'in principle' the concept of a caretaker administration. Wajed in a statement published Wednesday threatened to launch a non-stop campaign including shutting rail, road and air communications, and port operations from December 7 if the government failed to respond positively. Wajed also threatened to lay seige to Zia's residence at the Dhaka Cantonment barracks."]

Zia Urges Participation in Elections

BK2211162095 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has called on opposition parties to participate in the by-elections with a view to forming an interim national government.

Addressing a mammoth public meeting held under the auspices of Jessore District unit of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP] at the Eidgah ground in Jessore today, she said there is still scope to resolve the prevailing crisis through constitutional means. The prime minister said that in accordance with the constitutional process, by-elections is imminent while national elections is also approaching. She said to hold two elections within such a short time is not only expensive but also complex. Khaleda Zia said nobody desires this complexity and that is why the BNP is not interested in by-elections. She said that in the interest of arriving at a consensus, the opposition parties can participate in this by-elections and cooperate in forming the proposed interim national government which will then hold national elections.

The prime minister said if the opposition parties do not participate in the by-elections, she will ask the president to dissolve parliament. After this, national elections will be held. Giving an account of the programs being implemented by her government, the prime minister said these programs have strengthened the economy, reduced poverty, and improved the standard of living of the common man.

She said the work of the Youth Training Center in Jessore is progressing, adding that the conversion of the Jessore Municipality into a model town is going on. The prime minister said the demands raised earlier on the development of Jessore District have all been fulfilled. She said the Khulna divisional center of the Open University will be built in Jessore. She added that an organization for the correction of juvenile deliquency has opened in the meantime.

Police, Opposition Clash After Announcement

BK2211151695 Hong Kong AFP in English 1506 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Report by Nadeem Qadir]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, Nov 22 (AFP) — Police fired tear gas after opposition supporters went on the rampage after by-elections were announced Wednesday [22 November], setting off home-made bombs as the violence left 15 people injured, witnesses said.

Activists from the main opposition Awami League shouting "stop elections, do not accept elections" torched a microbus and damaged windshields of parked or passing vehicles at the end of a protest rally in downtown Dhaka, witnesses said.

Some reported gun shots, but the 15 were injured in clashes or while running for safety. Panic-stricken people fled and shops put up shutters as violence erupted, with police rushing to disperse the protesters.

Some other opposition groups also staged anti-government demonstrations warning of "dire consequences."

The violence came after news spread of Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's offer to the opposition to take part in upcoming by-elections to pave the way for national polls under an interim government.

"Let us form an interim national government for the period of (general) elections. The opposition can cooperate in the formation of this government by contesting in the upcoming by-election," Zia said in a statement published Wednesday.

Security was beefed up in the city following the incident, police said.

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina Wajed in a statement published Wednesday threatened to launch a nonstop campaign including shutting rail, road and air communications, and port operations from December 7 if the government called by-elections.

She also threatened to beseige Zia's residence at the Dhaka Cantonment barracks.

Zia, who has faced a 19-month campaign seeking her resignation and fresh elections under a neutral caretaker administration, did not elaborate on the make-up of her proposed national government.

However, a senior ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader who spoke on condition of anonimity said it would be close to Zia's earlier offer of a 10-member cabinet, including five government MPs and an equal number of opposition MPs. It would be headed by a BNP MP, this source said.

Asked if government would impose emergency measures if the current crisis led to a confrontation, he only said the government would follow the "laws of the land."

Acting BNP secretary-general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan told AFP the exact make-up of the proposed government was open to discussion, adding there "is still time for a settlement."

But a senior leader and former MP of the main opposition Awami League, Abdur Razzak, told AFP the opposition would accept nothing short of its demand for a "neutral caretaker government."

Opposition groups jointly termed the offer as "new wine in an old bottle."

Zia, in an apparent ultimatum to her political rivals, warned in the statement issued late Tuesday that she would ask the president to dissolve parliament if the opposition refused to take part in the by-elections.

The by-elections were triggered by the resignation of all 147 opposition MPs from the 330-seat parliament on December 28 in their bid to push for free and fair polls.

Bangladesh will hold by-elections on December 15 to fill 145 of the vacated seats, the Bangladesh Election Commission announced Wednesday. Nominations will close Friday.

Zia has rejected opposition demands as "unconstitutional" but repeatedly offered talks with Wajed to end the lingering standoff.

She offered to step down 30 days ahead of elections scheduled for early 1996, when BNP's five-year term ends.

India

Al-Faran Said Ready 'To Swap' Hostages for Leader

BK2211123295 Hong Kong AFP in English 1204 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SRINAGAR, India, Nov 2 AFP) — Muslim guerrillas holding four Western hostages in Kashmir have scaled back their demands and are ready to swap the captives for one imprisoned Muslim separatist leader, officials said Wednesday [22 November].

The officials, who requested anonymity, said that Al-Faran which kidnapped the four Western tourists in early July, was seeking the release of Masood Azhar, the secretary-general of the militant outfit Harkat-ul-Ansar.

Al-Faran, which Indian officials claim is a pseudonym for the Harkat-ul-Ansar group, had initially sought the release of 21 Muslim militants from Indian prisons. The group later demanded the release of 15 imprisoned rebels for the hostages.

The officials said Al-Faran representatives had told a government negotiator on Tuesday that the group was now ready to release the hostages in exchange for the freedom of Azhar, an academic from Pakistan arrested two years ago.

Harkat-ul-Ansar, which abducted two Britons in the Kashmir Valley last year and released them unharmed after 17 days, has denied involvement in the latest kidnappings.

The Indian government has repeatedly ruled out releasing any prisoners in exchange for the hostages saying it would only encourage more abductions.

Al-Faran, during Tuesday's negotiations, also asked the government for a new wireless set for contacts with the authorities, the officials said.

Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, American Donald Hutchings, 42, and German Dirk Hasert, 26, were kidnapped in early July while on trekking vacations in the Kashmir Himalayas.

Al-Faran claimed last week that one of the hostages, believed to be the American Hutchings, was very sick and near death.

The Muslim separatist campaign in Kashmir, India's only Muslim- majority state, has left more than 12,000 people dead since 1989.

Abductors Deny Plan for Exchange

BK2311132795 Hong Kong AFP in English 1246 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, Nov 22 (AFP) — Muslim rebels holding four Westerners in Kashmir for more than four months Thursday [23 November] denied press reports that they had agreed to free the hostages in exchange for one jailed Muslim separatist leader.

The Al-Faran rebel group, in a message faxed to the BBC office here, said the report that it had scaled down its demands and would release the four in exchange for the release of Masood Azhar was false. Azhar is the secretary-general of the militant outfit Harkat- ul-Ansar.

"It is only propaganda," the handwritten message said, blaming "Indian authorities" and the BBC and some newspapers for the "misinformation."

"We appeal to journalists not to believe such reports," it added. "We still stand by our demand for the release of 15 colleagues from Indian jails."

Al-Faran, which Indian officials claim is a pseudonym for Harkat- ul-Ansar, had initially sought the freeing of 21 Muslim militants from Indian prisons. The group later demanded the release of 15 imprisoned rebels for the hostages.

The officials said Al-Faran representatives had told a government negotiator on Tuesday that the group was now ready to release the hostages in exchange for the freedom of Azhar, an academic from Pakistan arrested two years ago.

Harkat-ul-Ansar, which abducted two Britons in the Kashmir Valley last year and released them unharmed after 17 days, has denied involvement in the latest kidnappings.

The Al-Faran kidnapped Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, American Donald Hutchings, 42, and German Dirk Hasert, 26, between July 4 and 8 while on trekking vacations in the Kashmir Himalayas.

The rebels killed a fifth hostage, 27-year-old Norwegian Hans Christian Ostro, in the first week of August.

The Muslim separatist campaign in Kashmir, India's only Muslim- majority state, has left more than 12,000 people dead since 1989.

Kashmir Abductors Call For Release of Colleagues

BK2311143995 Hong Kong AFP in English 1409 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, Nov 22 (AFP) — Muslim rebels holding four Westerners in Kashmir for more than four months Thursday [23 November] told Indian negotiators to "immediately" free 15 jailed colleagues to ensure the safe release of the hostages.

Official sources speaking on condition of anonimity said Al-Faran militants established telephone contact in the late afternoon and also asked Indian authorities to send them a wireless set.

"They said if the 15 people were not released immediately, we would be sorry," the sources said, adding that the militants did not specify a deadline or indicate what would happen to the tourists if their demand was not met.

"They told us that they would establish contact again on Friday," the sources said. Kashmir government spokesman Kulbushan Jindiyal confirmed the contact but did not give any details.

In a related development earlier, the Al-Faran, in a message sent by a courier to the BBC office here, denied press reports that it had scaled down its demand, asking only for the release of Masood Azhar, the secretary-general of the militant outfit Harkat-ul-Ansar.

"It is only propaganda," the [word indistinct] message said blaming "Indian authorities," the BBC and some newspapers for the "misinformation."

"We appeal to journalists not to believe such reports," it added. " We still stand by our demand for the release of 15 colleagues from Indian jails."

Al-Faran, which Indian officials claim is a pseudonym for Harkat- ul-Ansar, had initially sought the freeing of 21 Muslim militants from Indian prisons. The group later demanded the release of 15 imprisoned rebels for the hostages.

The officials said Al-Faran representatives had told a government negotiator on Tuesday that the group was now ready to release the hostages in exchange for the freedom of Azhar, an academic from Pakistan arrested two years ago.

Harkat-ul-Ansar, which abducted two Britons in the Kashmir Valley last year and released them unharmed after 17 days, has denied involvement in the latest kidnappings.

The Al-Faran kidnapped Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, American Donald Hutchings, 42, and German Dirk Hasert, 26, between July 4 and 8 while on trekking vacations in the Kashmir Himalayas.

The rebels killed a fifth hostage, 27-year-old Norwegian Hans Christian Ostro, in the first week of August.

The Muslim separatist campaign in Kashmir, India's only Muslim- majority state, has left more than 12,000 people dead since 1989.

Two Killed in Blast; Security Tightened in Delhi

BK2311055995 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Uttar Pradesh, two persons, including a subinspector of police, were killed in an explosion in Jhansi today. The explosion occurred when they were searching through the unclaimed baggage in a hotel room. The deputy inspector general of police, Jhansi Range, said the bomb was kept in a suitcase and exploded while opening it. He said the hotel manager reported to the police when one of the occupants of the room did not return for three days.

In Delhi, police today obtained important clues in yesterday's bomb blast in Connaught Place. The police said that the highly sophisticated time device used for triggering the bomb has been recovered. The police also rounded up 12 people in connection with the blast, which injured 30 people and damaged vehicles. Meanwhile, the minister of state for home, Professor M. Kamsen, reviewed the law and order situation in the capital at a high-level meeting this evening. The home secretary, Mr. K. Padmanabhaia, and other senior officials attended the meeting. The minister was told that the entire security system has been geared up to face any security threat.

Blast Said Claimed by 'Sikh Militant Group'

BK2311010395 Hong Kong AFP in English 1743 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DELHI, Nov 22 (AFP) — A Sikh militant group on Wednesday [22 November] claimed responsibility for a powerful bomb attack near a crowded restaurant in the Indian capital and warned of more attacks soon, the Press Trust of India said.

The news agency, in a despatch from the northern city of Amritsar, said it received a message saying Tuesday's explosion, in which 20 people were injured, was staged by the Khalistan Liberation Tigers' Force.

"No Kashmiri militant outfit was behind the explosion," the message, allegedly written by a spokesman for the group, said. "Our next target is the parliament. We have assigned suicide squads."

The statement said the bomb was planted to avenge attacks on Sikhs following the 1984 assassination of former prime minister Indira Gandhi by two Sikh bodyguards. Most of the perpetrators of the anti-Sikh pogrom have not been punished.

The blast, which occurred around 7:30 p.m. (1400 GMT) Tuesday in Connaught Place, Delhi's main shopping district, was earlier claimed by the Jammu Kashmir Islamic Front, a Kashmiri Muslim separatist group founded a month ago.

Police said a sophisticated pencil-timer explosive device was recovered from the area and 12 people were arrested in connection with the explosion, which damaged several restaurant window and 13 cars parked nearby.

In telephone calls to newspapers and news agencies in Srinagar, the Kashmir summer capital, a man claiming to be a spokesman for the group said the bombing had been carried out to protest "atrocities" by Indian troops in Kashmir.

Sikh separatists have carried out a number of deadly bombings during their campaign for a homeland called Khalistan in the northern state of Punjab and some groups are known to have links to Kashmiri Moslem separatist groups.

The authorities here sounded a "red alert" following the bombing, the first in the capital since the September 25 bomb blasts near the historic Red Fort in Old Delhi. No group claimed responsibility for those attacks.

Police Say Plastic Explosive Used

BK2311161195 Hong Kong AFP in English 1438 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Delhi, Nov 22 (AFP) — Indian police investigating a bomb blast which damaged restaurants in the capital's main shopping district and injured 20 people said on Thursday [23 November] that a powerful plastic explosive was used to stage the explosion.

"The bombers used 1.5 kilogrammes (3.3 pounds) of Pentra Erythretol Tetra Nitrate, a derivative of the more powerful RDX," sources in the investigating team said. "It was detonated by a pencil time-released device."

The attack, which occurred in the early evening Tuesday in Connaught Place, New Delhi's downtown commercial district, was claimed by the Jammu Kashmir Islamic

Front, a Kashmiri Muslim separatist group founded a month ago.

RDX was used in the March 1993 serial bombings in Bombay, India's commercial hub, in which more than 300 people died and several landmark buildings were damaged.

The investigating team said 10 more suspects, mainly Kashmiris, have been interrogated in connection with the blast. Twelve suspects were earlier questioned by police.

Official sources speaking on condition of anonymity said that RDX was being smuggled to central India in trucks carrying apples from the Himalayan province of Kashmir. They said two trucks had been seized on November 1 with 15 kilogrammes (33 pounds) of RDX.

Within hours of the attack, police here released composite sketches of two turbaned, bearded suspects and offered a reward of 25,000 rupees (750 dollars) for information leading to their arrest.

The men depicted in the black-and-white drawings appeared to be followers of the Sikh religion and were wanted in connection with Tuesday evening's blast and two bombings here in September which left 22 people injured, police said.

Sikh separatists have carried out a number of deadly bombings during their campaign for a homeland called Khalistan in the northern state of Punjab and some outfits are known to have links to Kashmiri Muslim separatist groups.

The authorities here sounded a "red alert" following the bombing, the first in the capital since the September 25 bomb blasts near the historic Red Fort in Old Delhi. No group claimed responsibility for those attacks.

The Muslim separatist campaign in Kashmir, India's only Muslim- majority state, has left more than 12,000 people dead in the past six years. India accuses Pakistan of fomenting the militancy, a charge denied by Islamabad.

Kashmiri Muslim groups seeking to end Indian rule over the northern state have generally confined their activities to the Kashmir Valley, although they have carried out a number of bombings in the Kashmir winter capital Jammu.

Five Policemen Said Killed in Assam Bomb Attack

BK2311033095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Assam, six persons, including five policemen, were killed on the spot and two others injured when suspected militants ambushed a police party with a remote control bomb near Udalguri in Darrang District yesterday evening. Official sources at Guwahati said the police party escorting officials was returning to Mangaldoi in Rohta area after taking photographs for identity cards for voters. The minibus in which they were traveling was badly damaged from the impact of the blast. The police have launched a massive combing operation in the area to nab the miscreants.

'Militants' Gun Down Former Kashmir Legislator

BK2311014195 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0035 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the Kashmir valley, a former MLA [member of the legislative assembly], Abdul Razzaq Mir, was shot dead by militants yesterday. His killing appears to be the result of the ongoing rivalry between different militant outfits. His bullet-riddled body was found in Laru village near Kulgam in Anantnag District. He had earlier been kidnapped from his house in Bichru village. Abdul Razzaq Mir was elected to the state assembly in 1987 as a member of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir Muslim United Front.

Low-Cost Stealth Technology Reportedly Developed

BK2411104095 Varanasi AJ in Hindi 29 Oct 95 p 6

[Editorial: "India Breaks U.S. Monopoly"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In developing the 'stealth technique' to shield warplanes from enemy eyes, India has not only ended the U.S. monopoly in this field but also surprised the entire world. Thus far, the U.S. was the only country in the world which possessed this technology. Planes built with this technology cannot be detected by radars and remain almost invisible. By acquiring this hitherto top secret technology, India has shown to the U.S. the level of scientific genius in this country. According to the magazine DEFENSE NEWS published in the U.S. capital, Washington, India is covering all its sophisticated warplanes with a black metal coat capable of absorbing light rays, which is described as the 'stealth technique'. The technique makes it impossible for the enemy radars to detect the flight of the planes. The main fighter aircraft forming the Indian fleet include Jaguars, Mirage 2000-H, MiG-29's, and MiG-21's, which will be plated with the above technique.

Developed by the Indian Defense Research and Development Organization, this technique is very inexpensive. One may be astonished to know that it costs only $1,000. Protecting warplanes worth millions of rupees at such low cost seems unimaginable, but our defense scientists have proved it to be true; and for this they really deserve our congratulations and praise.

Our defense scientists possess the expertise and capability to take the country to new heights, but due to resource constraints faced by the government, they are not able to progress as rapidly as desired. Defense research has now become so expensive that it cannot be sustained by government budget allocations alone. We often hear the call for the private sector to participate in defense research and production, but this has not happened yet solely because of government indifference. India is facing a nuclear threat from two sides. That is why its defense preparation needs to be accelerated, and defense research given the topmost priority. Doing this will enable us to protect our borders as well as earn foreign exchange.

Iran

U.S. 'Injustice' Said Imposed on Bosnian Muslims

LD2211142995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 22 Nov 95

[Station commentary; as heard throughout]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Based on incoming reports from U.S. news circles, Washington officials claimed on Tuesday 21 November the leaders of the negotiating parties have struck a deal in principle.

This comes at a time when a peace agreement is to be signed by the negotiating parties in the future. Meanwhile, despite the readiness voiced by Moscow and Paris over holding the Bosnian peace agreement in Russia and France, Washington has dismissed the two as venues for the agreements.

Political observers maintain that should the peace accord not be inked in Dayton, Ohio, despite all the ballyhoo raised by America, the general agreement reached from talks in Dayton is not all of what the White House has endangered its political image and prestige for over the peace talks. However, Washington and international bodies under U.S. command try to make the most of the weak-kneed peace agreement in terms of propaganda.

The U.S. President Bill Clinton, expressing satisfaction over the outcome of the talks, announced some of the articles of the U.S. proposed peace plan. An agreement whose articles mostly differ from what had earlier being predicted by the U.S. political circles prior to the peace talks in Dayton.

However, once again, the existing ambiguities in the agreement questions the main aim behind the accord namely the establishment of peace in the region.

One of the blurred points is the mechanism of a unified government which would run Serb and Croatian Bosnia. What astonish people in Clinton's speech was that he fell short of mentioning anything about the political entity of the Muslims, while talking about the Serbian and Croatian Bosnia. Though it might seem too early to pass over any judgements over the provisions of a peace plan, which is not being officially released yet, the main ambiguity along with the vague points existing over the performance and duration of the so-called NATO forces operation in Bosnia, is something which directly points out to America's opportunistic intentions in Bosnia.

At any rate is seems that America and the West political apparatus have totally forgotten some major political issues, which are directly linked with their prestige, among them is the fact that Washington has cast a somber shadow over the peace talks which had been going on from over 20 days by twice extending the deadline for defining the upshot of the talks from a peace accord to the start of war. Elsewhere, rebel Serbs do not accept the U.S. proposed plan and the Serb negotiating sides have announced that they will not sign any agreements. This all comes at a time when America is exerting great pressure on the Bosnia Muslim Government in order to impose its injustice terms.

UN Envoy Backs Dayton Accord, Although 'Not Just'

LD2311113795 Tehran IRNA in English 1008 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, New York, Nov. 23, IRNA — The Islamic Republic of Iran shares the sentiment expressed by Bosnians that although the agreement signed on Tuesday [21 November] in Dayton is not just, it is a move to prevent further bloodshed in Bosnia-Herzegovina, said Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the UN Kamal Kharrazi, here Wednesday.

Kharrazi made the statement before the Security Council at its general discussion on the situation in the former Yugoslavia.

He pointed out, "today, the Security Council is, once again, considering the situation in former Yugoslavia. Unlike its previous meetings on the subject, the Council is convened to discuss two important resolutions in the aftermath of yesterday's peace agreement in Dayton, an agreement that we hope could be the basis of the establishment of peace and tranquility in the region."

"From the beginning of the crisis in the Balkans, we have witnessed the tremendous sufferings of the people of Bosnia- Herzegovina in dealing with foreign aggression. Numerous documents of the United Nations as well as the television pictures of the horrors inflicted upon the Bosnian people by the Serbs testify the magnitude of the crimes," the ambassador emphasized.

He added, "the rape, murder, mass killing, wanton destruction of properties and ethnic cleansing have been persistently practised against Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In fact, the conscience of the whole world is wounded by the level of these atrocities. That is the reason behind the establishment of the war crime tribunal in former Yugoslavia."

"Therefore, it is the right expectations of the entire world that regardless of political considerations, the prepetrators of the grave crimes against humanity and the violators of international law should be brought to justice as soon as possible," Kharrazi cited.

He went on by saying, "the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina has always welcomed the peaceful settlement of the crisis and the achievement of peace and justice in that country and has shown its utmost flexibility in the negotiations. Yesterday's agreement proves, once more, the desirability of the Bosnian Government to arrive at a peaceful conclusion to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Iran's ambassador added, "We share the sentiment expressed by Bosnians that although the agreement is not just, it is a move to prevent further bloodshed in Bosnia-Herzegovina."

"We believe that despite its shortcomings, every effort should be made to implement the agreement which, inter-alia, guarantees the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina, with a unified capital, and provides the refugees and displaced people with legal right to reclaim their homes or receive compensation," Kharrazi stressed.

Iran's permanent representative continued, "What is needed now is the supervision of the international community over the implementation of the agreement in order to maintain the unity of Bosnia-Herzegovina and to restore peace and security in that country."

He also said, "the events of the past have demonstrated us that Bosnian Serbs have not honored their commitments. The Security Council has to ensure the compliance with the agreements and take the necessary and immediate measures in case of non-compliance."

"Overwhelming majority of member states have, on numerous occasions, called for the lifting of the arms embargo against the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the non-applicability of Resolution 713 to that republic," Kharrazi added.

"Now, with the signing of the Ohio agreement and its annexes and the adoption of a new resolution by the Council on lifting the arms embargo, we hope that the defence requirements of the victim will be adequately addressed so that future aggression against Bosnia is prevented," Iran's ambassador said.

In conclusion, Kharrazi reiterated the responsibility of the United Nations in the operation of the international force to be dispatched to monitor the agreement and added, "We believe the United Nations should have the final say in the operations and any agreement in this regard should have the clear endorsement of the Security Council. Furthermore, the international force should embrace all those who are willing to offer troops to it."

The Dayton agreement was signed on Tuesday, by presidents of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia at a U.S. military base in the state of Ohio.

Va'ezi Said To 'Fully' Support Bosnian Accord

LD2311185295 Tehran IRNA in English
1834 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Nov. 23, IRNA — Iranian deputy foreign minister for Euro-America affairs, Mahmud Va'ezi said here on Thursday [23 November] that Iran fully supported the implementation of the peace agreement on the settlement of the Bosnian crisis.

He said that Iran supports the views of Bosnian president and people to establish peace in the republic and the main problem with the implementation of the peace agreement is that the stipulation of the agreement should not impair the rights of Bosnian people.

Va'ezi pointed to Iran's concern over the developments in Bosnia and over the plight of the Muslim people there and said the continued fighting had led the country to a precipice, adding that Iran supported the decision of President Alija Izetbegovic's acceptance of the peace agreement at this juncture.

Russian Envoy's Comments on Nuclear Ties Reported

LD2211190195 Tehran IRNA in English
1811 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 22, IRNA — Russian Ambassador to Tehran Sergey Tretyakov sees no obstacle in the way of Nuclear cooperation between Russia and Iran, and says that Russian delegation is due in Tehran tomorrow for talks on completion of the Bushehr atomic power plant.

Tretyakov, who made the remark in an interview with the Persian daily 'IRAN' to be published on Thursday, November 23, adds that the delegation is led by one of the deputies of a Russian company busy building atomic power plants abroad.

He says that financial problems for starting work on the project have been removed and there is no problem at all in this respect.

According to Tretyakov, during the presidential summit in New York last month, between Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton, the Americans again tried to dissuade Russia from having Nuclear cooperation with Iran, but failed, "because Russia is an independent country, and selects its friends and partners for cooperation without allowing anyone to interfere."

"Russia is an independent country and the president and government make decisions of their own, despite the fact that the country is passing through a difficult economic stage, i.e. transition from a fully communist economy towards a free market economy," the Russian envoy maintains.

He adds that the Russian party has completed necessary research for work at the Bushehr power plant, and is awaiting the opening of a letter of credit from Iran in this regard.

"Fortunately", he says, "the issue was solved following the recent meeting between head of the Islamic Republic Atomic Energy Agency Reza Amrollahi and Russian Deputy Premier Aleksey Bolshakov. [punctuation as received]

The Russian official is optimistic that the Bushehr power plant would soon be completed.

He says that based on the contract between the two countries, the first phase of the power plant would be put into operation by the year 2,000.

The Iran-Russia cooperation for peaceful use of nuclear energy is within the rules set by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Va'ezi Comments on Russia-Ties, Caspian, Bushehr

LD2311225095 Tehran IRNA in English
2240 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, Nov. 23, IRNA — "Recent developments in the region as well as Iran and Russia's sharing close viewpoints have prepared the ground for further strengthening of political, economic, cultural and regional aspects," stated Mahmud Va'ezi, deputy foreign minister for Euro-American affairs.

Talking to IRNA here Thursday [23 November], the visiting Iranian foreign minister termed the outcome of measures as "positive", adopted by Iran and Russia, to help solve regional problems, including crisis in Tajikistan. He considered cooperation between two countries as "traditional and historical" and he added that expansion of Tehran- Moscow ties and their closeness would guarantee regional stability and security.

He went on to say that if it was not for Iranian and Russian leaders' firm will, the expansion of political, economic and regional cooperation was not possible. He said that if there were frequent exchange of talks between Iranian and Russian parliaments, it would serve as an important factor for bringing Iran and Russia's viewpoints about various issues closer to each other.

Based on new policies, he stressed, "Iranian border provincial officials have been advised to establish extensive economic ties with their neighboring Russian province." He added that Iran's Gilan Province had been successful in adopting extensive commercial measures and establishing aerial and sea links with Russian Astrakhan Province.

Referring to completion of a project for construction of Bushehr atomic powerplant, Va'ezi said that project would be implemented based on a pre-determined time schedule and that Iran faced no financial problem at present concerning the implementation of the project due to its opening a credit at Central Bank in order to pay for its first installment.

Also referring to recent session of Iranian, Turkmen and Kazakhstan's deputy foreign ministers in Ashgabat and their reaching agreement on formation of foreign ministers' session for continuation of debate on determination of the Caspian Sea legal regime, Va'ezi expressed hope that the session would help settle many outstanding issues through talks between the experts at different levels.

"Iran and Russia have signed a "very important" document on the Caspian Sea legal regime on the basis of their jurisdiction and within the framework of their position after the recent visit to Tehran by the Russian deputy premier, Aleksey Bolshakov," stated Va'ezi.

He underlined that Iran and Russia's common viewpoints was based on determining a coordinated action on the exploitation of the Caspian Sea resources according to its legal regime. He added that the Caspian Sea, as a region for peace and friendship, should be free of any arms and that littoral states should try to protect its environment. Touching on the war-torn Tajikistan Republic's pressing need for peace and tranquility and also on collaboration between Iran, Russia and the UN to make talks between Tajikistan and the opposition groups fruitful, Va'ezi expressed hope that positive viewpoints shared by either side would lead to a durable and permanent peace.

Commentary Views Russian Ties, Minister's Visit

LD2411151495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 24 Nov 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In an interview with the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC NEWS AGENCY on Thursday, November 23, the Iranian deputy foreign minister for Europe and American affairs, Mr. Mahmud Va'ezi, outlined the Russo-Iranian relations and emphasized that in his recent trip to Moscow he had reached agreement with the Kremlin officials that the expansion of ties between Tehran and Moscow guarantees the stability and security in the region.

He said in his interview cooperation between Iran and Russia has a long history, besides which the current international and regional developments have persuaded the two countries that the expansion of bilateral relations and its regional consequences can have a positive and constructive effect on the ongoing crises in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The common effort by Iran and Russia to resolve the Tajik civil war is a clear case in point in this regard. Right now Iran and Russia are preparing to hold the fifth round of Tajik peace talks while the volatile cease-fire brought about by Russia-Iranian cooperation is still holding in Tajikistan. Iran strongly believes that the only way to solve the Tajik crisis is through peaceful means and that resorting to force by the warring sides can have dire consequences and lead to creating a new Afghanistan in Central Asia.

Clearly none of the regional countries, and especially the Islamic Republic of Iran, would not welcome such development. So although cooperation between Iran, Russia, and the United Nations could prepare suitable grounds for the Tajik peace talks, the decisive condition to realize this is the readiness and political will of the belligerent sides to reach a lasting peace in Tajikistan.

Another important issue raised in Mr. Va'ezi's talks with his Russian counterparts was the legal status of the Caspian Sea. His talks in Moscow with the Russian deputy prime minister and foreign minister on this issue had been constructive. The result of these talks has been the common position of Iran and Russia that, before any kind of exploitation of natural resources in the Caspian Sea, a legal code must be adopted for all the Caspian countries to behave accordingly. As a peaceful and stable area, the Caspian region should be free from any kind of arms, and the countries round this sea must adopt a common strategy to preserve the environment and find proper ways of using its natural resources.

Minister's Comments on Afghanistan, War Reported

Said 'Optomistic' for Peace

NC2411094495 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 19 Nov 95 pp 1, 14

[TEHRAN TIMES Service Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TEHRAN—'Ala 'eddin Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister for Asia-Oceania Affairs, recently back from a visit to Afghanistan, told the TEHRAN TIMES that he was optimistic about the future of peace in that wartorn country.

"If other concerned countries cooperate with Iran in finding a solution to the bloodshed and work for peace in Afghanistan, serious steps can be taken toward this end," he said, adding that it is a primary responsibility of those countries to endeavor not to add fuel to the flames of civil war in Afghanistan.

Borujerdi expressed support for Mestiri's new plan, saying that if implemented it would be a big stride towards the peaceful settlement of the Afghan crisis.

He called on other countries to take a similar stance in order to help settle the crisis.

On the situation of the Rabbani government, the Iranian official said that the government is in a stronger position today. "In my visit to Turkmenistan, besides discussing bilateral issues, I discussed the Afghan problem with the Turkmen officials," Borujerdi said, adding that the Turkmen foreign minister was aware of Iran's stance on the fighting in Afghanistan and stressed the need to end the pernicious bloodshed there.

Calls For End to Fighting

LD2211215595 Tehran IRNA in English 2105 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 22, IRNA — Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific Affairs, 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, has appealed to all Afghan factions to end the bloodshed, pointing out that the internal conflicts will have no result except the killing of people and destruction of Muslim resources.

In an exclusive interview to appear tomorrow morning in the Persian-language daily 'IRAN', Borujerdi regretted that "certain groups and countries are still of the opinion that war can resolve the Afghan crisis, and that such views have resulted in the continuation of the war in that country."

Without naming anyone, he said that these groups and countries are those who are not willing to direct their efforts for a peaceful end to the Afghan crisis.

Saying that it is the duty of every Muslim and human-being to make efforts for bringing an end to the bloodshed in Afghanistan, the Iranian official who earlier this month visited Afghanistan and held talks with different factions, reiterated that Iran will continue its efforts and will support any attempt for a peaceful settlement of the crisis.

Asked about the Taleban militia, he said the reality is that compared to other Afghan groups, Taleban is a new phenomenon on the Afghan political-military scenes, and "although it has been active for a quite sometime, we think that more time is needed to make a careful assessment and decision about this new group."

Regarding Taleban's request for sending a delegation to Iran, Borujerdi said the Taleban had applied to the Iranian missions in Herat, Islamabad and Peshawar in this regard, but reply has not yet been given.

He told the daily that those who feel any concern for the developments in Afghanistan, should continue their assistance to the Afghan people.

Comments on Situation in Interview

LD2311222795 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1940 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Interview with 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, deputy foreign minister for Asia and Oceania, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Political Roundtable" program — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Correspondent] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Greetings to the dear viewers of the Week's Political [Roundtable] Program.

Last week 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi, our country's deputy foreign minister for Asia and Oceania, went to Afghanistan and held talks with the president and some other leaders of that country. This week we invited him to take part in the program and discuss the latest developments in Afghanistan. Mr. Borujerdi, thank you for accepting our invitation and taking part in our program. [passage omitted]

If we were to analyze the factors relevant to peace and stability in Afghanistan, perhaps the most important factors are the mojahedin groups. How do you see the role of those groups in Afghanistan's stability?

[Borujerdi] The fact is that no matter how well the Islamic mojahedin groups in Afghanistan acted during the [Soviet] occupation, after victory and the capture of Kabul they have not behaved well. That is regrettable. They were, and are, expected to show political, cultural and Islamic maturity, to opt for concord. Discussion is undoubtedly a prerequisite for concord. Naturally problems cannot be solved with force and weapons and war. For that reason I believe that if the present trend continues we will see that situation in the future. That is why in all our moves we have held, and will hold, talks with the leaders of those groups, to convince them to accept halt, as it were, a cease-fire, aimed at constructive talks. [passage omitted]

There are some rays of hope. If everybody in the region who stands to gain in the Afghan situation believes the same and makes the same effort, our way to peace will be shorter. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] You mentioned the importance of the issue in the eyes of the neighboring countries. Iran is a neighbor of Afghanistan too. But there are other regional countries and regional powers. Are they all aware of Afghanistan's importance?

[Borujerdi] Certainly the issue is important to everyone. There is no doubt of the importance they attach to the issue. We have discussed the matter with Pakistani officials, with Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, even Russia and all other countries which share borders with Afghanistan. The objective of these discussions has been to establish peace and stability in Afghanistan. We have felt that all these countries are concerned with the continuation of unrest and fighting in Afghanistan. However, it is natural that different states respond to the problem differently when it comes to doing something practical. At this point the differences of opinion are sometimes observed. Unfortunately these differences of opinion do not very much help the common objective, that is, establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan. We will, at any rate, continue our talks with these governments in the future in order to bring closer the different views.

[Correspondent] Recently Mrs Benazir Bhutto came to Tehran. Was her visit beneficial toward reaching the objective of creating peace and stability in Afghanistan?

[Borujerdi] Well, her visit took place within the framework of exchange visits by the two countries' leaders. Such visits normally take place once a year. However in view of the existing circumstances in Afghanistan, a considerable part of the leaders' talks was allocated to the issue of Afghanistan. The Pakistani prime minister explained her country's stance during her visit in Tehran. His Excellency President Hashemi-Rafsanjani also explained the Iranian views, namely the need to establish peace in the region and to stop the bloodshed. [passage omitted]

At the end of the talks the prime minister of Pakistan expressed the hope that such exchanges of views should continue in the future too. In fact this [exchange of views] is going to happen soon. The deputy foreign minister of Pakistan is due to arrive in Tehran this week to attend a meeting on ways of assisting Bosnia. They have proposed that this opportunity should be seized to continue the Tehran talks on Afghanistan.

[Correspondent] Perhaps we can also speak of another parameter in the Afghan problem which is the role of powers beyond the region. How do you assess this issue?

[Borujerdi] It seems that regional countries, particularly Afghan neighbors who have suffered the consequences of the crisis [in Afghanistan], deserve more involvement in the resolution of the Afghan problem. As you are aware, during the past 14 years we have accepted more than two or nearly three million Afghan refugees. Pakistan also accepted similar numbers. Therefore, it seems that actions taken by the countries beyond the region, particularly the United States... [pauses]...We think that the affairs of the region have nothing to do with the United States because their presence in the region, whether in the south of our country or there [Afghanistan], has done nothing to restore peace and stability. On the contrary it has contributed toward increased tension and instability in the region. So we believe that if regional countries took better advantage of the opportunity to increase their consultations and cooperations then a better choice is a solution within the region rather than beyond it.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency Mr. Borujerdi: The United Nations is another pillar [as heard] which has been to some extent involved in the issue of Afghanistan, and trying to solve the problem of Afghanistan. Thus far, a number of peace plans have been presented by the United Nations. Can you please describe their last peace plan, and then I will raise my question.

[Borujerdi] The truth is that the United Nations has not had a successful record in Afghanistan. Of course, the main reason for it is the great complexity of the issue of Afghanistan. [passage omitted] At the moment, Mr. Mestiri is active. In his new plan a council has been proposed. This council is composed of 28 members. This council will decide upon a person to whom the power will be transferred from the present president of Afghanistan. Mr. Rabbani's reaction to this plan has also been positive. Of course, there have been different and contradictory reactions to this plan on the spot, most of which have been negative toward this new plan by Mr. Mestiri.

[Correspondent] In other words, has the reaction of the jihadi movements toward this plan been negative?

[Borujerdi] They believe that the plan does not possess the necessary comprehensiveness, although according to the studies which have been made the 28-member group is composed of [representatives of] all the different provinces and regions of Afghanistan. Tribal elements have been taken into account, religious elements have been taken into account. Nevertheless, we have witnessed a negative reaction from the jihadi groups.

[Correspondent] As it has been already mentioned, there may be many different elements involved in the issue of Afghanistan: jihadi groups, the role of regional powers, the role of powers beyond the region and the role of the United Nations. Can one attribute the main problems to one of those elements, or is it really impossible to bring about a practical understanding among all these different elements, or should one look for the root of the problem inside Afghanistan?

[Borujerdi] It seems to be a combination of all these issues. Consequently, we have always referred to the issues of Afghanistan as a complex issue; and this is a reality. Different elements are involved. Of course, interference from beyond the borders [of Afghanistan] is an important factor; because if a country does not believe in a peaceful solution, in discussion and in a political solution, it is natural that such a country would intensify the conflict. In view of the capabilities of different governments, this can add to the complexity of the situation and can intensify the clashes. This is why we believe in discussion with various governments, and we are engaged in discussion, in order to bring their views closer to a solution which is based on discussion for the achievement of peace. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] My last question is a cliche. How do you see the future of the war-torn country of Afghanistan?

[Borujerdi] I believe that if all the current factors which are affecting it remain the same in the future, then my answer has to be a cliche too. That is: we do not see a clear future in Afghanistan unless those factors change and our efforts are aimed at changing those factors. That is to change the warmongering attitude to a peace-seeking attitude, and the holding of negotiations to bring about peace.

Pakistan Said Lying About Role in Afghanistan

NC2311095495 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 12 Nov 95 p 16

[Political commentary: "Illegal Trip"]

[FBIS Translated Text] During a trip to Afghanistan, the Pakistani foreign minister met General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam, leader of the National-Islamic Movement of the north, in Mazar-e Sharif. This trip, which was not coordinated with the Afghan Government, is further proof that Islamabad is violating its declared impartiality on Afghanistan's problems. It also shows Pakistan is interfering in Afghanistan's affairs. The Afghan Government has issued a statement in relation with this and has described the visit to Mazar-e Sharif by Pakistani Foreign Minister Asif Ahmad Ali and by Qazi Humayun, former ambassador of Pakistan in Kabul, as a provocative act contrary to all international laws and conventions.

The secret and illegal trip by the Pakistan foreign minister to Mazar-e Sharif last week took place in line with the efforts by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto during her visit to Tehran to remove doubts about her country's interference in Afghanistan's domestic affairs from the minds of the Islamic Republic's officials. The most explicit remarks by the Pakistani prime minister in relation with this were those to the Majles on Wednesday [8 November], when she told deputies: We are not interfering in Afghanistan. Only an insane person could think of committing suicide in this way. If anyone believes that Iran or Pakistan have anything to gain by interfering in Afghanistan, they must be out of their minds and... [ellipsis as published]

But there is no clear explanation as to why Pakistan is interfering in Afghanistan's domestic affairs, show by support for the Taleban group, secret trips to Afghan cities, and even visits to Afghan war fronts. The only clear stance by Islamabad, one it has repeatedly stated, is its denial of any interference in Afghanistan. This denial is contrary to what Pakistan is doing in Afghanistan.

The truth is that Pakistan has seriously invested in some political groups in Afghanistan. While Pakistan's huge support for the Taleban Group continues, last week the Pakistani interior minister described the deposed Zaher Shah as the "secret to national unity" in Afghanistan and expressed support for his return to Afghanistan's political scene. Islamabad's support focuses largely on groups that are at loggerheads with the Farsi-speaking government in Kabul and that have pro-Western inclinations and lack Islamic beliefs.

These special characteristics fully conform with Pakistan's support for the Talebans, Dostam, and Zaher Shah and are tantamount to Islamabad's efforts to determine the fate of Afghanistan without heeding what its oppressed Muslim people want.

Doha Negotiation Team Head on Ties With UAE

LD2311132995 Tehran IRNA in English
1253 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 23, IRNA — The head of Iranian negotiation team in Doha, Hoseyn Sadeqi, at the end of bilateral negotiations with a delegation from the United Arab Emirates, said that the negotiations were positive and that the talks will be resumed later on.

In an interview with the English-language daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' printed on Thursday [23 November], he added that the talks did not fail as some of the UAE officials have claimed. Asked to elaborate on the reason why the UAE officials termed the talks a failure, he said that the UAE delegation's expectations were more than what can be decided by a delegation at experts level.

The aim of the negotiations was to prepare an agenda for further negotiations based on the letter of the UAE head of state (20 April, 1992), he said, adding, any decision about misunderstanding on the Iranian islands was not within the jurisdiction of the meeting. Indeed any decision about the Iranian islands by the two delegations was invalid.

Sadeqi refuted the allegations of the UAE's head of delegation, Khalifa Shahine al-Merri on Iranian delegation's refusal to cooperate in drawing up an agenda. Indeed the Iranian delegation insisted that the main aim of the meeting was to draw up an agenda for further talks, he added.

Merri had told the official UAE new agency, WAM, that "Iranian side categorically refused to help draw up an agenda, arguing that the goal of the meeting was not to develop an agenda."

"There is no need for the UAE to exacerbate the problem, Sadeqi said, adding, any misunderstanding can be solved through bilateral negotiations. The two countries should prepare a ground for the next round of talks to be held in a peaceful atmosphere, he added.

Papers View Outcome of Talks With UAE

LD2311234395 Tehran IRNA in English
0843 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 23, IRNA — Two morning English language dailies Thursday [23 November] editorialized on the 5-day Doha talks between Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

TEHRAN TIMES wrote that although Iran is geopolitically the strongest country of the region, in order to prove its good-will it has agreed to sit across negotiation table with its tiny neighbor which has recently attained statehood. Referring to the talks, the newspaper stated that although at the beginning the UAE delegation welcomed the agenda, during the talks it expected the Iranian delegation to negotiate beyond the agenda's limits.

"Iran showed maximum flexibility to prove its goodwill during the talks," it underlined, adding but the UAE delegation insisted on its stance.

The UAE delegation must be well aware of the fact that it is not possible to settle a historical misunderstandings in a single meeting at experts level, the editorial noted, "Therefore, the expectations of the UAE delegation either stems from its lack of knowledge of the rules of negotiations or influences of alien powers."

Commenting on rejection of holding discussions in Tehran by the UAE government, it reiterated that even in Doha the UAE delegation did not show any goodwill by not paying any heed to the Shaykh Zayid's April 1992 letter to President Rafsanjani, which was supposed to be the basis of Doha negotiations.

"The UAE must also realize that there is no other alternative to bilateral talks," the article underscored, "Iran is powerful enough to defend every inch of its territory.

It stressed that the eight-year Iraqi imposed war bears enough testimony that even if all world powers support a country having a covetous eye on Iranian territory, Iran defends its territory tooth and nail. The best way for settling the existing misunderstandings is bilateral negotiations, it said adding, Iran's invitation of Shaykh Hamdun is still standing. The paper concluded, "the two sides can and should continue bilateral talks until they reach a final agreement."

Commenting on the same subject, another daily 'IRAN NEWS' said that what happened in Doha during the talks produced more fuel for western media to plant seeds of discord among the regional countries. Reports coming from doha said the UAE and Iran failed to gree on a course for settling an old misunderstanding, said the editorial. "True, the Iranian Foreign Ministry showed its goodwill through responding in the affirmative to the UAE initiative for holding talks in Doha. But, it was expected that the Foreign Ministry could have thought about the excuses the UAE was obviously looking for," wrote the article.

Now observers in Iran believe that the sheikhs in the UAE should coordinate their policy and iron out their own differences, noted the paper. However, the article concluded, this region needs stability and peace and no interference from powers outside the region.

Radio Commentary on Official Talks

LD2311212295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1530 GMT 23 Nov 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The four-day-long talks between the expert teams from the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Arab Emirates over the differences between the two countries ended without reaching any results.

Spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mr. Mohammadi has reiterated the need for the continuation of talks between the two sides, mentioning talks as the best way to remove misunderstandings and to provide the joint interests of the Muslim nations of the region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly announced that Tehran-Abu Dhabi talks are held merely to discuss how the affairs of Abu Musa Island should be administered and there is no discussion or doubt about Iran's sovereignty over Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb and the Lesser Tunb islands.

The UAE officials should basically be aware of this reality that, since the very [word indistinct] past, Abu Musa Island has been part of the Iranian territory and will remain so.

The colonialistic occupation of Abu Musa by Britain was never accepted by Iran. Therefore, in 1971 Britain was supposed to leave Abu Musa and hand it over to Iran.

It is clear that no country leaves its right of sovereignty to judgement; and in view of this undeniable principle, the Islamic Republic of Iran calls on the UAE officials to accept Iran's invitation for the continuation of talks in order to remove the existing misunderstandings concerning administration of Abu Musa without bringing up vain and baseless claims.

If the UAE chooses to base its policies concerning the neighboring states, including the Islamic Republic of Iran, on self- restraint and good neighborly ties, the issues of mutual interest will be settled easily through direct talks.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the roots and origins of the UAE's policy concerning the Iranian island, Abu Musa, should be sought in the pressures which come from outside. Such policies which can be considered as part of the U.S. plan to produce disturbances in the relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and its neighbors by the Persian Gulf [as heard]. Continuation of mutual talks can prevent the alien powers from taking advantage of this issue and disturb the Tehran-Abu Dhabi ties.

At any rate, in view of the significance the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches to good neighborly relations with the neighboring states, [the] dispatch of the Iranian expert team to Doha can be interpreted as an example of Tehran's good intension for reaching an agreement with the UAE. Certainly, removal of misunderstandings requires reciprocal good intention and political will. Therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran expects the second party to display its firm will and political honesty to remove the existing misunderstandings.

Oil Minister Sees OPEC Conference as 'Positive'

LD2311160995 Tehran IRNA in English
1550 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Vienna, Nov 23, IRNA — Iran's petroleum minister, Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i, evaluated as "positive" the outcome of OPEC's 99th ministerial meeting held here from 21-22 November.

Speaking exclusively to IRNA Thursday [23 November] Aqazadeh-Kho'i said considering nothing unexpected happens during the next six months the oil market will enjoy increased stability.

He further stressed on the importance of conference decision to maintain overall production ceiling of 24.52 million b/d up to end of June 1996.

"Despite anticipations that global crude demand will increase by a quarter of million b/d in 1996, the ministerial conference decided not to increase production believing that the move will push crude prices higher."

He also expressed hope that OPEC members will respect production quotas allocated to them by the organization.

The oil market will be watching OPEC measures and it is expected that the market will stabilize due to the decision by the organization, he concluded.

Public Support for Bank Case Verdicts Noted

LD2211174895 Tehran IRNA in English
1720 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 22, IRNA — The telephone lines at the IRNA office here kept ringing most of the day today, as people called the news agency to voice their support for the course of justice in the country following execution of Fazel Khodadad, the main culprit in the Rls. 1,230 billion embezzlement case of Bank Saderat (export bank).

The death sentence, issued against Khodadad and ratified by the supreme court last week, was executed early this morning at Evin prison, where he was being held along with two of his accomplices who were both sentenced to life.

The callers told IRNA that the execution of Khodadad, as an economic terrorist, was indicative of the power and independence of the judiciary.

Based on the court's verdict, besides the two who got the life sentence, six others involved in related charges were handed out varying degrees of long-term imprisonment and cash penalty.

Radio on New 'Battalions' To Enforce 'Virtue'

LD2211175995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
1630 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hojjat ol-Eslam Faqihi, the head of the office of the Vali-ye Faqih [the Guardianship of the Supreme Jurisconsult] at the Basij Resistance Force, has stressed the need for the preparedness of popular forces to confront social vices. Speaking to a Central News Unit correspondent today on the first day of Basij Week, he said that the formation of the Ashura and al-Zahra battalions were popular forces intended to enforce the implementation of the principle of propagation of virtue and prohibition of vice and said: More than 180,000 people have attended ideology classes and, according to a decision made by the Islamic Consultative Majles, the judicial power is duty-bound to provide these forces with legal support.

He rejected the recent foreign media propaganda about the formation of these battalions and said: These battalions have been formed from the heart of the people and it is the natural right of the people of any society to build their social life according to their own ideological beliefs.

Faqihi stressed: The personnel of Ashura and al-Zahra battalions have no intention of interfering in the people's private lives under any circumstances.

Pakistan

Minister Interviewed on Blast at Eyptian Embassy

NC2111212395 Cairo MENA in Arabic
2035 GMT 21 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Nov (MENA)— Pakistani Foreign Minister Sardar Ahmad Ali has asserted that the Egyptian Embassy blast in Islamabad on

Sunday [19 November] was a challenge to Pakistan for extraditing nine terrorists to Egypt during the past six months. He said his country accepts the challenge and will confront terrorism, as Egypt is doing.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM to be published tomorrow, Sardar noted that Pakistan had received from Egypt a list of the names of the nine terrorists, who had committed crimes in Egypt, and that measures stipulated by Pakistani law were taken to extradite them to Egypt.

He expressed his country's willingness to extradite any Egyptian criminal from its territory if Egypt asks. He said: If non-Egyptians were involved in the attack on the Egyptian Embassy, then they will be tried in Pakistan.

Sardar stressed that his country will do its best to identify the criminals. He described the day of the explosion as a sad and black day in Pakistan's history. He said his country feels that it, like Egypt, was a victim.

The Pakistani foreign minister went on to say that he will visit Egypt on 14 December at the invitation of his Egyptian counterpart, 'Amr Musa. He will be accompanied by Pakistani businessmen to discuss the possibility of setting up joint projects.

Sardar added that his talks with Musa will include bilateral relations as well as international issues, such as the Kashmir and Middle East problems.

Embassy Bombers Said 'Certainly Not Pakistani'

NC2211110695 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0915 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 22 Nov (MENA)—Asad Muhammad 'Alawi, director general of the police and security department in Islamabad, has declared that several people are being interrogated to determine whether they are involved in the Egyptian embassy bombing. He, however, declined to disclose their number. He added that search continues for the five Afghan nationals who were employed by the embassy.

In statements to AL-AHRAM published today, the Pakistani official said that there are three eyewitnesses, one of whom is an employee at a bank opposite the embassy building. This employee saw the incident right from the start, he added. The police director refused to disclose the number of the attackers in the car, noting that the car had colored glass. He also dismissed the charges leveled against the police force of being impotent. He stressed that it is very difficult to stop suicide operations. He said that the nationality of the attacker or attackers is certainly not Pakistani. [passage omitted]

Minister on Investigation of Egyptian Embassy Bomb

NC2311082395 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0632 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—Pakistani Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar has stated that Pakistan is working closely with the Egyptian Government to fight terrorism. He noted that Pakistan handed over nine terrorists to Egypt in the past few months and said that the Pakistani Government will do its utmost to end the presence of terrorists on its territory.

In an interview with the newspaper AL-AHRAM published today, Babar declared that he opposes the presence of the International Islamic University in Islamabad, which is a security threat because most of its students are poor foreigners who have little to live on and therefore can easily be exploited by the terrorists. He noted that the students can play host to terrorists in the university town outside the campus.

The Pakistani interior minister said that investigations into the bombing of the Egyptian Embassy have produced some results but it is too soon to say that the authorities have identified the culprits.

Babar added that the chassis and engine numbers of the vehicle used in the attack have been found and sent to Japan to discover who bought the vehicle in the first place. He said the Pakistani Customs Authority will be asked to help to determine how the vehicle was brought into the country.

The Pakistani interior minister did not rule out that the explosives used in the embassy bombing could be the same type used in the Oklahoma City incident. He pointed out that if this is the case, it will be easy to determine their source.

U.S. Help in Investigation Criticized

BK2211115095 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
22 Nov 95 p 6

[Editorial: "A Matter of Shame"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On Sunday [19 November], the interior minister moaned in the Senate that his head hangs in shame on the grave security lapse which led to the terrorist attack on the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad. On Monday, he sounded up-beat when he announced that the U.S. security men are coming to assist the Government of Pakistan in tracing the culprits. On both occasions he was illusive. In the Senate, he expressed shame without being repentant. On Monday, he announced acceptance of the U.S. offer without remorse.

For the Pakistani nation, it was a matter of shame that its government had to accept the U.S. "offer" of assisting in the investigation of a crime which was committed on Pakistani soil and about which it had developed an expertise of its own. Pakistan became a target of terrorism — both local and international — more than 20 years back. Its agencies have successfully solved many cases and arrested many a terrorist. Any inputs that Pakistan might have needed from outsides could be provided by the Egyptian security experts because the incident involved Egyptian nationals. There is every justification of associating the Egyptians. But why the U.S. experts? Who wants them here?

It is most certainly not in Pakistan's interest to associate the Americans with everything that goes wrong here. Particularly so when we are taken for granted and confronted with a fait accompli. According to reports, the U.S. team of experts arrived in Pakistan on Monday, the day the interior minister announced that the Pakistan Government has accepted the U.S. offer. It means only one thing: That the American "experts" in God-knows-what were already on board their plane when the acceptance was announced. When exactly was the offer made has not been made public judging by how they have been behaving, particularly in the post-Cold War era, it would be perfectly in style with the U.S. way of doing business with smaller nations if it turns out that the "experts" were dispatched even before an offer was made to the government here.

Even if the "offer" and dispatch of the experts was simultaneous, it raises questions about Pakistan's sovereignty. Whey didn't we politely reject the offer by saying "thank you very much for the offer but we would let you know if and when we need it?" What has encouraged the Americans to take Pakistan for granted? What is our compulsion for not saying "no" to our American friends, particularly when they appear to violate our sovereignty? True that the Americans are not known to respect any other nation's sovereignty but what about our own duty to uphold our national sovereignty and project it from encroachment! We did not fight a long battle to win national independence from the British Raj to sacrifice it at the altar of U.S. national interest.

The Interior Minister says that terrorism is an international phenomenon and that fact somehow justifies U.S. interference in a case with which it has no direct link. If that line of argument was accepted, why other governments who are facing similar acts of terrorism on their soil are not being assisted by the U.S. experts? Has the French associated the Americans to investigate acts of international terrorism which are increasingly becoming a headache for them? The Americans know that they cannot be presumptive with countries like France. Charles de Gaulle had rightly said that the Americans want to be everybody's neighbours. The American leadership knows too well that they cannot play "neighbour" to France. Why should we accept them as our neighbour, our shared concern for international terrorism notwithstanding? They are not even our neighbour's neighbours. Remember how blatantly the Americans were accusing Iran of being behind the Oklahoma bombing? The allegations were dropped only when the real culprits were captured and it was clear that they were American Christian.

We urge the government of Pakistan to review its decision of associating the U.S. experts with the investigations into the dastardly act of terrorism on our soil against our brotherly country of Egypt.

Sources: Sudanese Sought in Egyptian Embassy Bomb

BK2311131295 Islamabad THE NATION in English 23 Nov 95 pp 1, 11

[Report by Ishtiaq Ahmad]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD — None of the three Egyptian militant organisations — Gama'a al-Islamiyya, International Justice Group, and Al-Hehad — is responsible for the Sunday's [19 November] suicide bombing of the Egyptian Embassy. Instead, the tragic act may have been performed by Muslim groups of other nationalities.

The authorities in Cairo as well as Egyptian ambassador in Islamabad Muhammad Nu'man Jalal seem to link the suicide bombing with the transnational militant movement in the Muslim world.

"Mr. Jalal insisted that the terrorist act was performed either by Sudanese, Somalian or Algerian militants," says an intelligence official who attended Tuesday's meeting at the Egyptian embassy.

Besides the Egyptian ambassador, Director General, Federal Investigation Agency, members of the Egyptian investigation team and Pakistan's intelligence agencies, and Additional Superintendent of Police (Crimes) were present in the meeting held to review progress in suicide bombing investigations.

About the probable sites of concentration of the Arab and African militants, both the Egyptian and Pakistani investigators believe that most of them have their settlement either at Jallozai, (Pabbi) a place near Peshawar, or in Jalalabad, the capital of Afghanistan's Nangarhar province, which is a stronghold of Golboddin Hekmatyar's Hezb e-Eslami.

The reason as to why the Egyptian authorities rule out the possibility of involvement of any Egyptian militant outfit in the tragedy is sources believe, that the outlawed organisations have tried to "take credit" for the suicidal attack to "make themselves look like very important orgnisations back home."

"All the three of them have claimed responsibility for the bombing, and this they have done to gain domestic credibility for their militant outlook. However, the actual culprits may be from elsewhere and they have preferred not to identify them," said the intelligence agency source, quoting discussions the Egyptian investigative delegates had with their Pakistani counterparts.

Interior Ministry sources confirm that they are after a Sudanese national who, they think, was behind the bomb blasts. "Besides 600 Egyptians, there are about 800 Sudanese and 600 Algerians stationed illegally in Pakistan," says a visiting Cairo-based journalists.

Ruled by a military regime, Sudan is accused by Cairo of involvement in the last June assassination bid on President Husni Mubarak in Ethiopia. Declared terrorist state by the United States, it has strained relations with Egypt. The Cairo authorities blame Sudan for giving protection to the leaders and activists of Al- Jehad, Gama'a al-Islamiyya and other militant Muslim groups of Egypt. Many of these militants are facing death sentence back home.

About the state of investigation, both Egyptian and Pakistani sources told this paper that no clue had yet been found, and that portions of the explosive material used in the blasts were being examined in the laboratories. Given the extremely high intensity of the main blast, the possibilities are that the explosive carried by the suicide bomber in his vehicle may consist of TNT, a highly explosive material.

Earlier, the authorities in Cairo had hinted at the involvement of the International Justice Group. But that was done primarily on the ground that just a week before the Islamabad blasts, this terrorist group had claimed responsibility for the car bomb assassination of one Egyptian trade official in Switzerland.

"After this, we were asked by our officials in Cairo to take emergency steps to tighten the security. And, for the purpose, we did contact the Interior Ministry," said Ahmad Ismail Hossein, the Egyptian Press Counsellor, confirming the lapse of proper security from the Pakistani side as one of the causes of the tragic happening. On Wednesday, the Egyptian ambassador met Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar who assured him hat all the Pakistani intelligence agencies were busy in thorough investigations of the incident. After the meeting, Mr Jalal told journalists that the enquiry team was examining all possible aspects that could help trace the terrorists.

"We are trying to trace all clues that can lead us to the culprits of this helnous act," he told The Nation, adding that he and other Egyptian officials in town were in constant touch with Pakistani officials of various agencies probing the deadly incident.

Our Correspondent from Peshawar adds: The agencies investigating explosions in Islamabad have reportedly held another suspected Arab national from Peshwar airport on Tuesday afternoon.

The highly placed sources of a secret agency told The Nation that the apprehended Arab citizen was to leave Peshawar for abroad. However, he was arrested by personnel of secret agencies and shifted to an unknown place.

An officer of a central government secret agency when contacted said that they have been directed not to allow the Arab nationals to go abroad. In this connection, they are questioning those Arab nationals who want to board international flights. He, however, expressed ignorance about arrest of a suspected Arab from Peshawar airport on Tuesday afternoon, while an employee of provincial government controlled secret agency said that an Arab national has been arrested.

The said officer also conceded that two Egyptians apprehended from a local hotel lae Monday night have been shifted to Islamabad and handed over to the joint investigation team. Names of these two Arabs were ascertained as Mr Bari and Mr Haleemi. The officer said that in the light of primary investigation from Bari and Haleemi, the high ups of the investigation team giving too much importance to their disclosures. He said that both of them will be further interrogated by experts of the joint investigation team, consisting on Pakistanis, Egyptians trained in US and an American, considered [an] authority in explosive subversive activities.

Some other officers of secret agencies said that they are continuing search for suspected Arabs in general and Egyptians in particular. Besides, monitoring movement of Arabs at Peshawar airport, five star hotels, offices of the NGOs, a number of teams are also guarding the main check posts on Pak-Afghan border. While the authorities have assigned the task to its informers amongst the tribesmen in inaccessible tribal areas.

Meanwhile, departure of eight hardline Arabs from Kunar and Nangarhar provinces of Afghanistan multiplied difficulties of the authorities dealing with Arab mujahideen. These Arabas have left Terrah valley of Khyber Agency for Kunar province of Afghanistan in early 1994 after armed clashes with their former host tribesmen.

These Arabs are known for their extremists ideology and even they don't consider Afghans, Pukhtoons and tribesmen as Muslims.

A high level officer said that NWFP [North West Frontier Province] government had directed political agents of all agencies to unearth these hardline Arabs. He apprehended that these people were residing somewhere in the tribal areas after their eviction from both Kunar and Nangarhar provinces.

He said that if these people adjusted themselves in the tribal areas, the government functionaries may have to face situation like 1994.

Minister Says 10 Arrested for Egyptian Embassy Bomb

BK2311144495 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The interior minister, retired Major General Nasirullah Khan Babar has said that Mian Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif family owed over 6.146 billion rupees of 31 banks and financial institutions.

Addressing a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon, he gave details of loans obtained by 19 industrial units of Mian Sharif family. He said the amount of 6.14 billion rupees have been supplied by various banks and financial institutions. The interior minister gave unit-wise extraction from the banks and financial institutions by 19 industrial units of the Mian Sharif family. He said not a single DFI [Development Financial Institution] was spared which was not forced to pay the desired extraction.

The interior minister also gave details of import of scrap from USA on bank's money. According to National Bank of Pakistan, New York, Ittefaq Foundry imported scrap worth $17.84 million through Messrs (Hungo Newsons) New York. He said Ittefaq Foundries have been opening letters of credit in various nationalized banks with deliberate intention of never fulfilling their credit commitment and have been getting their amount adjusted by securing loans from the same banks under political pressure. He said the entire import of scrap was made on the basis of public money and scrap products were sold on profit without clearing the credit facilities which are still outstanding. During 1990-1993, Ittefaq Foundries sold machinery to 11 sugar mills to the tune of 1,334 million rupees. Despite making this much money, the banks were not paid back in spite of their repeated request. The new sugar mills were forced to buy machinery from Ittefaq Foundries. Even banks were forced to realize loans only to the industrial units getting machinery from Ittefaq Foundries. General Nasirullah Khan Babar also gave details of illegal purchase of travelers checks. He said Sharif family had arranged purchase of $1.13 million worth of travelers checks which were used as collateral in a dubious manner for securing heavy loans. The interior minister said Mr. Shahbaz Sharif has been taking loans from banks by forging signatures of other partners like Mian Khalid Siraj. Mr. Babar said chalans [details] in all these cases of extraction of money have been filed in the courts. This has been done on the complaints of banks and DFI's. He said the government does not believe in victimization and all cases have been prepared after getting solid proof.

The interior minister, retired Major General Nasirullah Khan Babar, told newsmen today that 10 foreign nationals have been arrested in connection with the bomb blasts at the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad on Sunday [19 November]. He said they include six Egyptians, two Afghans, and two Jordanians. These people were arrested from Peshawar, Islamabad, and Karachi on suspicion.

He said so far, there is no hint about involvement of any group or any Pakistani national in the bombing.

To a question about the foreign nationals, who were stopped at airports of the country from leaving after the blasts, he said after necessary questioning and screening they have been allowed to leave the country.

Meeting Views Egyptian Militant Group 'Threat'

BK2311083795 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 23 Nov 95 p 1, 5

[Report by Sami Ullah]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Nov 22 — A high level meeting chaired by Federal Minister for Interior Gen (Retd) Nasirullah Babar and attended by the visiting Egyptian Deputy Internal Minister and others discussed the situation arising out of the threat of an Egyptian militant group "Al Jihad" to attack Pakistani targets.

A top government official who attended the meeting on Wednesday told this correspondent on condition of anonymity that the investigators had arrested some

Arabs in Peshawar who had given some vital information about those who were involved in the bombing of the Egyptian Embassy in which 16 people were killed. Details of these information are expected to be given by Interior Minister Gen (Retd) Naseer Ullah Babar in a press conference on Thursday.

Sources said that in today's meeting which was also attended by Egyptian Ambassador Noman Galat, Secretary Interior Ilyas Mohsin IG [Inspector General] Police, Islamabad, Asad Aivi and Additional Director FIA [Federal Investigation Agency] Relmian Malik, the Egyptian experts gave a briefing to their Pakistani counterparts on their country's militant groups and the ways they operate. The ways to check further possible acts of terrorism also came under discussion.

An Interior Ministry official told this correspondent on condition of anonymity that there were strong possibilities of acquiring the services of U.S. experts on terrorism for improving internal security.

According to a report the arrested Arabs were two Egyptians who had been brought to Islamabad.

Pakistan has been trying to arrest and deport Arab nationals after the Afghan war as a number of countries including Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia have blamed that their nationals were indulging in terrorist activities in their respective countries using Pakistan as their base.

During the Afghan war, Pakistan was an open house and over 6,000 Arabs from different countries came to Peshawar and then proceeded to Afghanistan to fight against the communists. Most of these people are still in Afghanistan and as border control is difficult, they keep on moving from Afghanistan to Pakistan.

Meanwhile Gen Babar said that recent arrest of leaders of various religious parties in Punjab had no connection with the explosion in the Egyptian Embassy.

Talking informally to a group of reporters in the Parliament House today, the interior minister said there was an increase in the sectarian killings in Punjab during the last few months. The authorities have arrested leaders and workers of some religious parties to check this trend and it has nothing to do with explosion in the Egyptian Embassy, he added.

Responding to a query Gen Babar said the team of U.S. experts on terrorism had not arrived as yet. However the Egyptian experts were already here and assisting Pakistani experts in the investigations.

Our Lahore Bureau Adds: The Punjab police continued its crackdown on religious parties activists throughout the province and arrested several people.

The exact number of the arrested leaders and workers of Sipah-i- Sahaba Pakistan, Sipah-i-Mohammad Pakistan and Tehrik-i-Jafferia Pakistan could not be ascertained as the police continued to enlist the names till Wednesday evening.

The Punjab police launched the crackdown on Tuesday on the special instructions of the Governor of the Punjab Saroop Ahmed Khan and arrested more than 50 persons in connection with increasing incidents of sectarianism in the province.

'Advisers' Reportedly Offered for Bosnian Efforts

BK2411092595 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 24 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has said Pakistan is ready to provide every possible assistance for reconstruction of war ravaged Bosnia-Herzegovina. In an interview to BBC, he said a massive international effort will be required for reconstruction of Bosnia. He said Pakistan and Bosnia- Herzegovina are enjoying very good relations and if need be Pakistan will be sending advisers and experts to help Bosnian Government undertake the task of reconstruction.

Referring to the tripartite peace agreement signed in Ohio recently by the Balkan states, he said it was the responsibility of President Milosevic to ensure the agreement is fully implemented by the Bosnian Serbs.

Bosnia Accord Said Welcomed; U.S. Role Praised

BK2211162395 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has welcomed the agreement reached at Dayton, Ohio, by the presidents of the republics of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia for a comprehensive peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

A statement issued by the Foreign Office in Islamabad this evening says the historic accord paves the way for establishing a just and durable peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina and for restoring harmonious and mutually beneficial relation among the peoples of the Balkan. It stresses that conducive conditions be created for implementation of the peace accord which requires sustained commitment by the international community to help overcome remaining obstacles. The exemplary wisdom, foresight, and commitment to peace demonstrated by President Alija Izetbegovic and his government in the long and arduous negotiations merit special appreciation. The statement also pays tribute to President Clinton and the U.S. Administration for the commendable effort made by the United States for the cause of peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Accord Said 'Unlikely' To Bring Peace

BK2311090595 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 23 Nov 95 p 6

[Editorial: "The Dayton Depression".]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The U.S. sponsored peace talks between the Croats, Bosnians and the Serbs have ended. There is no formal Dayton declaration except Mr Clinton's statement that "our leadership made this peace agreement possible." Looking at some of the clauses of the Ohio Accord, it indeed shows the imprint of American leadership whose global considerations are visible behind every word which the besieged and depressed Bosnians had to accept. The upshot of this meeting, as of all others, is to reward the aggressor with legitimisation of the annexation of the captured territory.

Presidents Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia, Franju Tudjman of Croatia and Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia were invited by the United States to initiate talks on those terms which could be mutually agreed by the three sides. Wright-Patterson Air Force base was chosen for the parleys as a reminder, in case there were reluctant negotiators, of the powerful umbrella under whose shadow the global affairs were shaped. These talks ran into many problems particularly whenever the question of rewarding the Serbian aggressors with more territory came up for discussion. The Bosnian foreign minister, still insisting that these talks have failed, had offered his resignation earlier because he felt that Bosnia's legitimate demands were not even being considered at the negotiating table. The interesting or perhaps the intriguing part of this whole affair is that the agreement between the Croats and Serbians preceded the so-called final accord. The justification for this could be found in the fact that since the Croat-Serb conflict was considered less complicated, it was thought prudent to decide that first. But what the sponsors of this summit did not realise was that the 43 month old Balkan conflict had its axis elsewhere. Or did they want to show the Bosnians that in case they did not agree on the terms dictated by the outcome of this one-sided display of brutal aggression by the Serbs, they will have to face the united wrath of the Croats and the Serbs?

The Dayton Accord reveals the pressure of this high-handedness: Bosnia will remain a single state but only with 51 per cent of its territory and that too would be jointly controlled by a Muslim-Croat Federation. The remaining 49 per cent will be administered by the Bosnian Serbs. Sarajevo stands united under the Muslim Croat administration but some of its districts would remain autonomous under the Serbs. The question of widening a Serbian corridor to the town of Broko from the eastern and northern Bosnian territories under the occupation of the Serbs has been left for international arbitration. War criminals indicted by an international tribunal for prosecution have been only asked not to hold any political office, at best for the time being.

These decisions betray not only the trust that humanity places in such efforts, they also reward the aggressor, the criminal and the violator of some of the most sacred rights of mankind. Who will account for the massacre of over 250,000 innocent people? What solace has been provided to those two million whose homes, factories and farms were looted and burnt and they were thrown out under the open sky? Under what logic 15 per cent more territory has been given to the Serbs? What happened to the cries and humiliations of thousands of women who were subjected to inhuman drama of gang rapes? Neither it will be easy to unload this heavy burden on Western conscience nor would it lead to restoring an everlasting peace in the unfortunate land. Should we read in these clauses a message for the Muslims on the pattern of the ignoble prophecies of Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" or should we see this as a real face of the "Civilized West"?

The Dayton Accord has allowed too much to be ignored. It has proved once again that all previous efforts in this shameless and shallow drama of "peace" efforts were meant to render this tiny, defenceless and harmless Muslim state vulnerable to the vultures of the crusades. What sealed their fate was not the U.S.'s loudly trumpeted consideration for human rights or liberalism or even a durable peace, but undisguised pure and simple logic of power and aggression. The scars on Bosnia are not going to be hidden by the shadow of the Western might. They will remain visible and continue to prick the conscience of humanity. What is even more horrible is that the map drawn as a result of these negotiations is unlikely to lead to a peace in Balkans. Instead it is likely to encourage not only the Serbs to swallow more territory, but would provide a precedent to their other cohorts elsewhere in the world.

Spokesman Speaks on Peace Plan for Afghanistan

BK2311134995 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Office has said fast changing ground realities around Kabul must be taken into account while dealing with any transitional mechanism for transfer of power in Afghanistan. The Foreign Office spokesman at the weekly briefing said any peace formula should reflect agreement between all Afghan groups and ethnic entities. About the 28-member interim council announced by Mahmoud Mestiri [UN special emissary on Afghanistan], he said it is up to the Afghan people to accept it or reject it. But certain limitations have been pointed out by some Afghan groups. The spokesman said Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali's visit to Saudi Arabia that concluded today was mainly for consultation on Afghanistan with Saudi foreign minister, Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal. Sardar Asif and Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal have agreed to work closely on peace efforts in Afghanistan.

Afghan Peace Plan Discussed With Saudi Arabia

BK2411021795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have proposed that the UN plan for peace in Afghanistan must take into consideration the ground realities.

This was stated by foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali at the end of his three-day visit to Saudi Arabia today. During this visit, he held a detailed discussion with his Saudi counterpart, Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, on Afghanistan as well as regional and international situation. The two sides proposed that the UN peace plan must include the establishment of an interim council reflecting current realities in that country to ensure that it is a representative body of all Afghans. All heavy weapons should be removed from Kabul and surrendered to a neutral security force. The neutral security force should be composed of Afghans only and the control of the city and all heavy weapons should be entrusted with this force. Thereafter, the entire country should be cleared of heavy weapons.

Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali apprised Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal of the situation in South Asia, with particular reference to Pakistan-India relations and the situation in occupied Kashmir. The Saudi foreign minister reaffirmed his country's principled stand on resolving the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Conference.

Article Views Purchase of Frigates From China

BK2211132295 Karachi DAWN in English 21 Nov 95 p 1

[Article by Ghulam Hasnain: "Frigate Deal Awaits Ministry's Approval]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, Nov 20 — Pakistan may miss an ideal opportunity to have a bargain purchase of four new Chinese frigates owing to delay by the Finance Ministry in giving a green light to the Navy.

In July last, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had approved a 625 million dollar proposal to purchase four new Chinese Type-53 frigates, while presiding over a meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet. The Chinese Government had not only agreed to sell the frigates with latest weaponry and sonar system but also agreed to transfer the technology to Pakistan.

It was due to this that the prime minister had approved the proposal but since then the file on the project has not been cleared by the Finance Ministry.

On Monday [20 November], senior naval officials, who briefed newsmen about Sea Spark '95, feared that time was fast running out for Pakistan as some neighbouring oil-rich countries had also started showing interest in the frigates.

The naval officials, who are dosely monitoring political developments in China, felt that any more delay in the approval by the Finance Ministry might rob the country of a chance of striking a better deal with the present political leadership in China.

"Knowing the government's financial constraints, the Navy had also offered to the government to pay the first three installments from its own budget kitty," said a senior naval official.

"If China struck a deal with some other countries then it will be very difficult for Pakistan to have the same ships at the same price, and we may end up in giving some more millions of dollars," they added.

"The Type-53 frigates have been very successful. It is because of this that regional navies have started taking interest in them. The building of these frigates in Pakistan under Chinese transfer of technology will go a long way in boosting the naval defence," the officials added.

Iranian Firm Said Willing To Invest 70 Billion

BK2411100995 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 24 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] An Iranian firm has expressed its intention to invest about $70 billion in various development projects in Pakistan. The chairman of the Iran and Pakistan Industries Limited, Mr. Mahmud Fakr Makhdam, told chairman of the Board of Investment, Syed Safdar Abbas Zaidi, in Islamabad that the projects include development of infrastructure, airports, gas pipelines, expansion of gas purification plant at Sui and development of coastal roads and fish harbor in Gwadar.

Balochistan Minister, Official Said Shot Dead

BK2211133795 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Balochistan provincial minister Ayub Buledi; provincial election commissioner, Mr. Faratullah; and their driver; were shot dead in Turbat today. According to official reports, Mr. Ayub Buledi, a prominent leader of Balochistan National Movement-Hai Group; Mr. Faratullah; and their driver Ali Hasan; were going to Buledi from Turbat when they were ambushed and came under heavy fire. The minister who was critically injured was rushed to Turbat Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

Brother of Sindh Chief Minister Said Killed

BK2311092495 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0900 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Unidentified armed men killed three persons, including Syed Ehsan Ali Shah, brother of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Abdullah Shah in Karachi this morning. They were traveling in a car in Gulburg area. Syed Ehsan Ali Shah was working as deputy director [position as heard] of Karachi region.

Sri Lanka

President Addresses Nation, Calls For Peace Talks

BK2311094095 Hong Kong AFP in English 0851 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Nov 23 (AFP) — Sri Lanka President Chandrika Kumaratunga Thursday [23 November] called for negotiations to end the country's dragging Tamil separatist war, after the rebels carried out another spectacular attack against an air force plane.

Kumaratunga said the military was on the verge of completing the "first phase" of its offensive against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) but warned that the end of the war would not mean lasting peace.

"We must negotiate a lasting political solution and then, and only then, can there be peace for our people," Kumaratunga said in her address to the nation broadcast over state radio.

She did not directly invite the LTTE for talks but said her government wanted peace with honour and dignity for all those involved in the drawn-out conflict which has claimed more than 50,000 lives since 1972.

"The defeat of the enemies of peace who were thought to be invincible is near," she said. "The war is not against the Tamil community but against ruthless terrorists."

Her remarks came a day after the LTTE downed an air force plane near the northern Jaffna peninsula, killing 60 people on board. The attack came four days after a similar attack which brought down a larger cargo plane.

Both aircraft were taking men and equipment for reinforcements in the army's biggest offensive to capture the rebel bastion of Jaffna which the rebels had ruled as the capital of a de facto state for the past five years.

Further on President's Call for Peace

BK2411050595 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 24 Nov 95

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] We must negotiate a lasting solution. Only then could we ensure true peace for us and our children".

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga in an address to the nation yesterday said the first phase of the battle for peace was on the verge of being concluded and requested the people to celebrate the victory calmly and peacefully.

While celebrating, she said, members of the Tamil community should not be harassed by word or deed.

"I have instructed the security personnel to deal very sternly with any member of the public who uses this critical period to intimidate any member of the Tamil community or to incite any fonn of violence", the president said.

The following is the text of her message:

My government was installed in office by you on a promise of peace with honour and dignity for all.

In the quest for peace, our gallant soldiers are on the verge of concluding the first phase of the battle for peace. They have defeated the enemies of peace who were thought to be invincible.

I wish to stress that the end of this war does not mean peace. We have to establish civil rule in the North. We.have to convince the people of the North that the administration of the Sri Lanka government means the end of the evil of terror and the dawn of a free and prosperous life.

We have to resolve the grievances of the minority community which had prevailed since independence.

We must negotiate a lasting solution. Only then could we ensure true peace for us and our children.

"We are forever beholden to all our army, navy, airforce and po]ice personnel who laid down their lives for the sake of peace in our motherland. I thank their families and grieve for their lost ones.

"I request every citizen to celebrate our victory calmly and peacefully. The war effort was not against Tamil civilians but against a ruthless group of terrorists who do not want peace. We must in no way harass the

Tamil community by word or deed. I have instructed the security personnel to deal very severely with any member of the public who uses this critical period to intimidate any member of the Tamil community or to incite any fonn of violence.

I have also directed that a complaints desk be set up at the Presidential Secretariat to handle telephone messages from any member of the public at all times of the day and night.

I assure you that we will ensure that peace will prevail and that finally a durable peace for all Sri Lankans will be achieved with honour and dignity

May the blessings of the Triple Gem be with you all".

'Revised' Plan for Tamil Autonomy Said Announced

BK2411072195 Hong Kong AFP in English 0707 GMT 24 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Nov 24 (AFP) — The Sri Lankan government will present its revised proposal offering minority Tamils a degree of autonomy once security forces subdue Tamil rebels in the island's north, President Chandrika Kumaratunga has announced.

Kumaratunga told state television in an interview shown late Thursday [23 November] that a legal draft of a political package had been finalised and would be presented to legislators for approval once the rebels were defeated.

"We will choose the correct time (for presenting the draft) once we have stabilised ourselves militarily," Kumaratunga said, adding that her military will keep up pressure on the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Her remarks came as the army mounted a siege on the LTTE citadel of Jaffna in the north of the country Thursday after a 36-day offensive which left 457 security personnel and some 1,750 rebels dead, by official count.

She said a power-for-peace plan she unveiled on August 3 had been subjected to wide public debate and an amended version emerging from the discussions will be presented to a parliamentary panel for further deliberations. The plan would turn Sri Lanka into a federal state in all but name and grant greater autonomy to minority Tamils.

In an address to the nation earlier Thursday, Kumaratunga called for negotiations to end the protracted ethnic conflict which has claimed more than 50,000 lives in the past two decades.

"We see the Tamil people (as) different from the LTTE, though at the moment irretrievably involved with the LTTE," Kumaratunga said, adding that she had no alternative but to order an offensive against the rebels.

"We have a different dialogue with the Tamil people and we have offered a political package and extended a hand of friendship," said Kumaratunga, who romped to power last year on a pledge to restore peace in the country.

Kumaratunga, a member of the majority Sinhalese community, said failure of successive governments to resolve the problems of Tamils led to "terrorism."

Shortly after coming to power last year, Kumaratunga opened talks with the LTTE but in April this year the rebels abruptly pulled out to resume their protracted campaign for an independent homeland in the island's northeast.

Defense Ministry Says Jaffna Lagoon 'No-Go-Zone'

BK2311111195 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1036 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, 23 Nov (LANKAPUVATH) — The government has declared the Jaffna lagoon (Kilali lagoon) as a no-go-zone with immediate effect, the Ministry of Defense has announced.

A ministry news release said the emergency regulation prohibits any person from entering this area on boats or in any other manner and remaining within the zone for any purpose whatsoever without the specific authority of the commander of the Navy or the commander, Northern Naval Area in Karainagar.

Contravention of the provisions of this regulation will be a punishable offense. Strict measures as may seem necessary, including the use of force or the use of firearms, will be taken to enforce the regulation.

The public are also warned that it would be a grave risk to enter the lagoon in the context of prevailing hostilities.

Troops Said Consolidating in Jaffna City Area

BK2311114895 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Security forces are now engaged in clearing operations in Nallur and consolidating in the area within the Jaffna city limits. According to the operational headquarters of the Defense Ministry, a column of troops are advancing southwards. The terrorists are reported to be resisting with heavy machine gun fire and mortar. The troops retaliated effectively supported by armored [vehicles] and artillery, causing heavy casualties to the terrorists. In these confrontations, one soldier was killed and three officers and 22 soldiers wounded. The security forces captured Arialai East and (Siviaseru) West areas, both within the Jaffna city limits. They forced terrorists to flee the area with their dead and injured. As a result of yesterday's fighting, ground troops confirmed that a minimum of 45 terrorists were killed and over 100 injured.

Military Announces Siege on 'Rebel Citadel'

BK2311131395 Hong Kong AFP in English
1250 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Nov 23 (AFP) — The Sri Lankan military Thursday [24 November] announced a complete blockade of the Tamil rebel citadel of Jaffna after a day of heavy fighting which left at least 117 soldiers and guerrillas dead.

Chief military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said the military carried out a pincer movement under the cover of darkness early Thursday to seal off Jaffna, the bastion of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"A large number of Tigers are now trapped inside Jaffna town," Munasinghe told reporters here.

"We have effectively imposed a blockade on Walikamam," he said, indicating a district which includes Jaffna town.

He declined to say when the military would storm into the town centre, which is still 2.5 kilometres (1.5 miles) away from the army defence lines. "We are now within the city limits and we intend to stay in Jaffna," he said.

He said the siege was completed with the capture of the coastal town of Colombothurai, effectively bisecting the Jaffna peninsula and preventing the guerrillas from slipping in and out of the town.

At least 17 soldiers were killed and 93 wounded in overnight fighting, Munasinghe said. He claimed that at least 100 rebels were killed and more than 150 wounded in the close-quarter fighting.

The army made a spectacular entry into the municipal limits of Jaffna by capturing the Nallur area on the eastern edge of the town on Monday and since then moved southwards towards the Jaffna lagoon, he said.

The military launched its ongoing offensive code-named Rivirasa (Sunshine) on October 17 with the aim of driving the Tamil guerrillas from Jaffna, the capital of a de facto state run by them in the past five years.

"Our objective was to dismantle the parallel administration they had established," Munasinghe said. "We have succeeded in doing that and the Tigers are now on the run. We have trapped them."

The military claim came barely a day after the LTTE shot down a transport plane near the Jaffna peninsula, killing all 60 passengers and three crew members.

Tamil Rebels Reportedly Shoot Down Air Force Plane

BK2211154195 Hong Kong AFP in English
1536 GMT 22 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Nov 22 (AFP) — A Sri Lankan air force transport plane with some 60 passengers crashed on Wednesday [22 November] off the war-torn northern Jaffna peninsula, official sources said here.

The Antonov-32 crashed into the sea shortly before it was due to land at Palaly, the main military base in the region, the sources said.

"It has obviously been shot down (by Tamil Tiger guerrillas)," a source said. "But we have to find out whether it is a missile or machine gun fire that brought it down."

It was not immediately clear if there were any survivors.

The AN-32 plane disappeared from the radar at 6:40 p.m. (1310 GMT), about an hour after it had taken off from a military airport on Colombo's outskirts, the sources said.

The sources said the pilot asked the control tower at Palaly, located on the northern edge of Jaffna peninsula, to switch on runway lights to land.

"That is the last we heard from him," an official said.

The crash came four days after the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) downed a Chinese-built Y-8 transport aircraft, the biggest with the Sri Lankan air force, off Palaly, killing five of its six crew members.

That plane had also taken off from near Colombo and was carrying barbed wire and fencing for troops advancing on the LTTE bastion of Jaffna.

The LTTE has shot down four air force planes since resuming its dragging separatist campaign on April 19.

Crash Cause Said 'Still Not Known'

BK2311055695 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English
0505 GMT 23 Nov 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Nov 23 (LANKAPUVATH)—Troops at the Palali military base in Jaffna have reported seeing an explosion like a flash of lightning in the night sky as the Sri Lanka

Air Force Antonov-32 aircraft disappeared from the air traffic control radar screen Wednesday [22 November] night and crashed into the sea, about 7-10 nautical miles north of the military airfield as it was making the approach run to land. Senior military sources told LANKAPUVATH that a part of the wreckage is still jutting out of the sea.

The reason for the passenger plane crashing into the sea was still not known and that the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] was silent about the incident. The sources said that the possibilities were that the LTTE shot it with small arms fire or missiles, a technical snag or the explosion of a grenade which one of the 53 soldiers on board were carrying.

The sources said that naval divers were early Thursday morning reported searching for the bodies of the 53 soldiers including two officers and six airmen and three crew. This is the second AN-32 aircraft which has crashed during the last two months.

Meanwhile, the sources said that Operation "Riviresa" (sunshine) was proceeding splendidly without any interruption or hindrance in the northern Jaffna peninsula.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 352
MERRIFIELD, VA.

This is a U.S. Government publication produced by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Its contents in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

FBIS collects, translates, disseminates, and analyzes foreign open-source information on behalf of the U.S. Government. Its publications may contain copyrighted material. ***Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.***

- Bracketed indicators before the first sentence of each item describe the way in which the material was processed by FBIS.
- Headlines and all bracketed explanatory notes are supplied by FBIS.
- Personal and place names are rendered in accordance with the decisions of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as adapted by FBIS. Unverified names in radio and television material appear in parentheses and are spelled phonetically; words and phrases in parentheses preceded by a question mark are unclear in the original and deduced from context.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

U.S. Government Customers

For a list of FBIS products, to subscribe to an FBIS publication, or to indicate a change of address contact:

FBIS
P.O. Box 2604
Washington, DC 20013-2604
Telephone: (202) 338-6735
FAX: (703) 733-6042

Non-Government Customers

Subscriptions are available from the National Technical Information Service:

NTIS
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161
Telephone: (703) 487-4630
FAX: (703) 321-8547

New subscribers should expect a 30-day delay in receipt of the first issue.